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CHRISTMAS MORALITIES.

THE moralities of Christmas! And what are they? Are not moralities always moralities? And is there any season in which it is more proper than in others to exhibit and to practise them? Certainly not. Christmas moralities and virtues are those of the whole year; but at Christmas time the heart, for once, is more our teacher than the world. We are more willing than usual to listen to the promptings of the inner voice, and to encourage kindly sentiments towards each other. We do not speak of Christmas Day merely. That is a day sacred to all hearts, and every pulpit in the land has a privileged expositor of its sanctity. We speak of Christmas time—the period intervening between Christmas Eve and Twelfth Night—the close of the Old Year and the beginning of the New; and we seek to discover the social idea that both embellishes and consecrates it.

To many Christmas is a time of sorrow. The man hard buffeted by the world, who has struggled during a whole year to make both ends meet, and to retain his social position, dreads the examination of his affairs, which he too surely knows will prove that all his efforts have been in vain. To him Christmas is but

the remembrancer of distress, and the shadow of approaching calamity.

Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate
Full on his bloom,
And crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be his doom.

Yet even such a man may, if he pleases, find consolation at Christmas, not only by forgetting the perplexities of his position for the one day, in which men resolve to throw off care, but by learning to look the worst steadily in the face, and so gather strength to rise above it. But it is only to the struggling—and they are, unfortunately, a large class in this world of keen competition—that Christmas comes robed in terrors. To the rich man, who is master of his own wealth, and to that happy character, the rich poor man, whose wants are measured by his means, Christmas times are ever genial. The social sentiment which fills the minds of all who reflect, or of multitudes who do not reflect, is that of a rubbing off of scores with all men, moral as well as pecuniary; of a beginning again with new hopes, and of a celebration of the compact with ourselves and the world—by hospitality, good fellowship, and good wishes. The main idea is derived from the religious character of the festival: it is that of

forgiveness. Of all the social virtues forgiveness is, perhaps, the most prolific. Like all unselfish feelings it is a blessing to self. We forgive for the delight of forgiving; and we increase thereby our own chance of forgiveness. It is not in the bargain, but it is paid to us. We did not sow the one seed in anticipation of such a harvest; but we gain an abundant crop, all the more precious because utterly unexpected. To banish animosity from our breast is to get rid of a disagreeable and troublesome visitor; to expel hate is to free ourselves from a corroding disease. But it is far better even than that; for we not only expel that which is unpleasant and hurtful, but in the place of it we receive, and make one with our own being—spirit of our spirit—that which is pleasant and beneficial. Go out, Hatred—come in, Love! Get thee gone, Rancour: and welcome, most welcome, thou sweet-visaged and full-souled Charity! The heart being once opened to forgive, cannot be shut again immediately. A whole train of generous feelings, that only want encouragement and an open door, rush in and take possession, and cannot be extruded again in one day, although we should try ever so much. Forgiveness may not, like Mercy, be twice blessed. It may not bless the man who is forgiven. It may be scorned and con-



CAROL SINGING IN THE COUNTRY.—DRAWN BY DODGSON.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

temned; but what of that? The more it is scorned, the greater is its brilliancy; the greater the contempt or ingratitude with which it is received, the greater its own merit. Besides, the man forgiven may not know that he is forgiven. There is no ostentation in the matter. There may be Mercy without Forgiveness; but wherever Forgiveness is, Mercy cannot be absent. Mercy, too, may be proud and haughty, and even revengeful; but Forgiveness is always humble. A savage may be merciful; but it takes a Christian to forgive.

The minor virtues of Christmas time are all contagious. When all the world forms good wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, who is the churl that would refuse to respond to them or share them? If it be true that "one fool makes many," it is still more true that good wishes beget good deeds. Kindly feelings are as epidemic as foolish ones; perhaps more so. In ordinary seasons the distance between the tongue and the heart may be somewhat long and devious; but the good wishes that are upon the tongues of all men must perforce take up their habitation in the hearts of some of them.

The hospitalities of an English Christmas are proverbial all over the world. From the Monarch in the halls of Windsor down to the humblest peasant or mechanic in his cottage or lodging some hospitality is exercised at Christmas. Every family, according to its means, makes merry for this day. And while there is feasting among the rich the poor are not neglected. The good old English gentleman of the ballad is a type of all English at the period of Christmas—

For while he feasted all the rich
He ne'er forgot the poor.

The palace and the hall rejoice, and the workhouse shares the universal feasting of the occasion. Paupers for once, at least, in the melancholy round of the year are made partakers, not of the good feelings, which, we trust, they always share, but of the good cheer that is in fashion for one day in the three hundred and sixty-five. So strong is the sentiment of the day that even grim justice has been known to relax, and permit the cell of the prisoner to be irradiated by such hospitable sympathy, as roast beef and plumb pudding can afford to their recipients. There are thousands upon thousands of magnificent spectacles that no eye ever sees in the aggregate of their magnificence, but which the active brain can nevertheless imagine. What a spectacle, for instance, England would afford on this, or any other 25th day of December, to an eye so far raised up above our atmosphere, and so penetrating, as to be able to look into its myriad habitations—palaces, castles, towers, halls, villas, cottages, and hovels; whether in hamlet, village, town, or metropolis, all at the same time! What an irradiation of smiling faces would look up into the cold wintry air! What genial gathering together of families and friends would dot the large and living map with multitudinous spots of light; small as the glow-worm's lamp in some places, but still clear and visible; and in others, large and varied as a city illumination! But though we cannot see these things, we know that such things are. We know that parents and children, friends and lovers, are associated for the purposes of intercommunion and hospitality; and that love, under some one or other of its various manifestations—of parents for children, children for parents, the young for each other, and of neighbour for neighbour—is the presiding spirit of these homely and homeful festivals.

With joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet.
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years.

We know that under thousands and tens of thousands of mistletoeboughs kind words are said, and sweet vows registered often without the aid of words at all, though certainly not without the aid of lips, and eyes, and pressure of the palms. We know, too, that acquaintanceship becomes warmer, friendship more cemented, and love more loving, under the influence of this day! and we forgive Christmas its bills (which would have to be paid some time or other), for the sake of the charity and goodwill which it fosters through all ranks of society. Therefore we say, Blessings upon Christmas, and to each and all of our readers may it prove a Merry one!

ON CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

BY R. H. HORNE.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY DODGSON.

In preparing to take a seasonable, and therefore a genial survey of the half festive half religious songs, entitled Christmas Carols, we are stopped at the outset by two considerations, each claiming precedence. Since it is quite clear they cannot both stand first, we must attend to them separately. The two considerations to which we refer are these: the claims of the ancient Carols, such as were sung in the days of the Anglo-Saxon Kings after their conversion to Christianity, and in the festivities of the same season among the Danish and Anglo-Norman Kings, all of whom "wore their crowns in public" on the occasion, which, with other less remote dates, take precedence in respect of time; and the claims of the modern Carols, dating from Herrick, or rather from Milton's Hymn to the Nativity, which must certainly take precedence of all others for its poetic grandeur, and, we may add, its divine fervour. Settled, however, this point must be before we can proceed; and it may be as well, therefore, to commence at once with our friends in the olden time.

As early as the first and second centuries, we find that the Birth of Christ was celebrated. In the third century, this "holy night" was kept with so many festivities, that Gregory Nazianzen, who died A.D. 389, and other Christian teachers of the time, considered it necessary to caution the people against making the hilarities resemble a heathen rite, by forgetting the heavenly objects in an excess of feasting, singing, and dancing. It would also appear that these exhortations to sobriety were partly intended as a wise caution and salutary warning; for, in the same age, there is the record of a horrible atrocity, in the shape of a wholesale massacre, committed when an indulgence in these festivities had thrown the people off their guard. A multitude of Christians—men, women, and children, of all ages—had assembled in the temple, at Nicomedia, in Bithynia, to commemorate the Nativity. In the height of their happiness, when all the wickedness and cruelties of the world were forgotten, Diocletian the Tyrant surrounded

the temple with his soldiers, who set it on fire, and nearly twenty thousand people were burned alive, or otherwise destroyed on the occasion.

The Anglo-Saxon Kings, having been converted, held the festival of the Nativity with great solemnity and splendour, and displayed the greatest hospitality to all strangers of rank. A similar course was adopted by the Danish and Anglo-Norman Kings. Nor were these ceremonies by any means confined to solemn observances; on the contrary, the descendants of those who, in Pagan times, had been used to quaff great bowls of wine in honour of Thor and Odin, now drank them to commemorate the Apostles, the Virgin and other sacred names. A curious Anglo-Norman Carol, of the date of the thirteenth century, is given by Mr. Brand, in his "Popular Antiquities" (vol. 1, p. 371), which is, to all intents and purposes, a jolly bacchanalian song, for a bass voice. The greatest rejoicing and merriment prevailed, particularly as displayed in dancing, and singing Carols; and, to such an excess had this been carried, that a preposterous legend has grown out of it, carefully handed down by William of Malmesbury, who gravely relates how that fifteen young women and eighteen young men were dancing, and singing Carols (A.D. 1012) in the church-yard of a church dedicated to St. Magnus, on the day before Christmas, whereby they greatly disturbed one Robert, a priest, who was performing mass in the church; how that the said Robert sent to tell them to desist, but they would not listen; how this Robert offered up prayers for a suitable punishment; and how that the whole party were miraculously compelled to continue singing and dancing for a whole year, night and day, without ceasing—feeling neither heat nor cold, hunger nor thirst, weariness nor want of sleep; and, though their clothes did not wear out with all this inordinate exercise, yet the earth beneath them did; so that, when they left off, the earth had worn away all round them to the depth of several feet, while they danced in the hollow.

The earliest Carol is, of course, the Nativity Carol mentioned in *Luke* (c. ii. v. 14), which was sung by the angels. In the twelfth book of "Paradise Lost" this hymn is thus mentioned:—

His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night:
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
Of squadron'd angels hear his Carol sung.

Other hymns were gradually composed on this subject; and it is stated by Mr. Brand, in his "Popular Antiquities," on the authority of an ancient Ritualist, that "in the earlier ages of the Church, the bishops were accustomed, on Christmas Day, to sing Carols among the clergy." So say Durand and others.

But it is time to give the reader a few specimens of the "Christmas Carols" of our forefathers.

Amidst a great mass of very questionable stuff, not to call it rubbish, some of our earliest Carols possess a peculiar beauty—a sort of devout innocence and happy faith, very refreshing in themselves, and more especially when compared with the modern, as well as the elder rubbish to which we have alluded. The first we shall select is from the Harleian MSS. (No. 5396—time of Henry VI.); printed, also, in Ritson's "Ancient Songs." Bishop Taylor considers it identical with the earliest one, which the Angels sung to the Shepherds:—

CHRISTO PAREMUS CANTICAM EXCELSIS GLORIA.

When Chryst was born of Mary, free,
In Bethlehem, that fayre citee,
Angels sang with mirth and glee
In excelsis gloria!

Herdsmen beheld these angels bright,
To them appearing with great light,
And sayd God's Son is born this night,
In excelsis gloria!

This King is coming to save mankind,
Declared in Scripture as we fynde,
Therefore this song have we in mind,
In excelsis gloria!

Two words, illegible in the M.S., we have been obliged to supply, and to modernize several Anglo-Saxon characters, and abbreviations. All the rest is verbatim.

In one of the Coventry pageants, in the early part of the 15th century, several songs are introduced, rude in structure, but, as Sandys thinks, fairly entitled to be regarded as Carols. The one we are about to quote is unquestionably a Carol:—

SONG BY THE SHEPHERDS.

As I rode out last night, last night,
Of three joyous shepherds I saw a sight,
And all about their fold a star shone bright—
So merrily the shepherds their pipes can blow.

SONG BY THE WOMEN.

Lul-lee, lul-lay, thou little tiny child—
Bye-bye, lul-lee, lul-lay!
O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day,
This poor youngling, for whom we do sing
Bye-bye, lul-lee, lul-lay.
Herod the King, in his raging,
Charg'd he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight,
All young children to slay.
Then we is me, poor child, for thee,
And ever we mourn and say,
For this journey wild, thou little tiny child,
Bye-bye, lul-lee, lul-lay.

Carols were much in request during the whole of this century, as we learn from the above and other authorities. Tusser mentions one to "be sung to the tune of 'King Solomon,'" and in the time of Shakespeare Carols were continually sung about the streets at Christmas.

A Latin poem by Naogeorgus, a Bavarian, written in the sixteenth century, and made English, after a fashion, by Barnaby Goode, alludes to the Carol singing of the time, with its various customs, which were evidently far more jocund than reverential.

Three weekes before the day whereon was born the Lord of Grace,
And on the Thursdays, boys and girls do runne in every place,
And bounce and beate at every doore, with blows and lustie snaps,
And crye the Advent of the Lord, not born as yet, perhaps,
And wishing to the neighbours all, that in the houses dwell,
A happy yeare, and everything to spring and prosper well.

We must conclude, with one or two more specimens, our account of the ancient Carols, together with the merry songs of the season; and we cannot refrain making our selection once again of a song on the head of the forest lord of yore. It is ushered in, as usual, with trumpets and minstrelsy:—

CAROL

On bringing Boar's Head, used before Christmas Prince, at St. John Baptist's College, Oxford, Christmas, 1607.

The boare is dead,
See, here is his head;
What man could have done more
Than his head off to strike,
Meleager like,
And bringe it as I doe, before?
He, living, spoyled
Where good men toyed,
Which made kind Ceres sorrye;
But now dead and drawne,
Is very good for brawne,
And we have brought it for ye.

Then set downe the swineyard,
The foe to the vineyard,
Let Bacchus crowne his fall;
Lett this boare's head and mustard
Stand for pig, goose, and custard,
And so you are welcome all!

The other Carols with which we intended to terminate our account of these songs of the olden time, we find, on further consideration, to be too long for extract. As, however, they are of the legendary character, we must content ourselves with telling the story of one of the best.

The first is called "The Carnal and the Crane." The Star in the East was so bright that it shone into King Herod's Chamber and alarmed him. He questioned the Wise Men about it, who told him that a babe was born this night who should have power which no King could destroy. Herod pointed to a roasted cock which was on a dish before him, and said, "That bird shall as soon be able to crow three times as this thing be true which ye tell." Whereupon feathers instantly grew over the roasted cock, and he rose high on his legs and crowed three times standing up in the dish!

We pass on to the popular broad-sheet Carols, of a rather more modern date. Though the majority be very wretched stuff, there will sometimes be found verses that appeal directly to the feelings by their homely strength, and coming from the heart of the writers.

Oh, pray teach your children, man,
The while that you are here;
It will be better for your souls
When your corpse lies on its bier.

To-day you may be alive, dear man,
Worth many a thousand pound;
To-morrow may be dead, dear man,
And your body laid under ground:

With one turf at your head, O man,
And another at your feet,
Thy good deeds and thy bad, O man,
Will all together meet.

In the century preceding the present, the wassail bowl was commonly carried, on Christmas eve, to the houses of the nobles and gentry, with songs, in return for which a small present was expected. As midnight approached, the carol-singers and bell-ringers prepared to usher in the morning of the Nativity with the usual rejoicings, so that all at once bells rang in the middle of the night, singing was heard, and bands of music went playing through the towns and villages and outskirts, and round about to all the principal houses of the county families. In the West of England the Carol-singers often used to repair to the church porch, or to the porch of some ancient house, to sing-in Christmas morning; and it is a rural scene of this kind which the Artist has portrayed in the Illustration that accompanies the present account.

A similar scene is described by the author of the "Sketch-Book," on his visit to Yorkshire at this time of the year. He awoke in the night with the sound of music beneath his window, which then floated off to a distance. Then there was singing, which sounded in the porch. "In the morning," he says, "as I lay musing on my pillow, I heard the sound of little feet pattering outside of the door, and a whispering consultation. Presently, a choir of small voices chanted forth an old Christmas Carol, the burden of which was—

Rejoice! our Saviour, he was born
On Christmas-day in the morning.

It is extraordinary, considering the beauty and grandeur of the subject—comprising, as it does, in its essence, the whole history of humanity, its errors, its sufferings, its hopes, and final victory—how very few poets have written Carols. We only know of one great poet who has done so—need we say that this one was Milton? (Göthe and Coleridge have each written a Carol, but of no very remarkable kind.) It must not, however, be forgotten, that Herrick has written several very beautiful Carols, not displaying any strength of vision or divine ardour, but characterised by a sweet poetical playfulness. Here is a verse from his

ODE ON THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR.

Instead of neat enclosures
Of interwoven osiers;
Instead of fragrant posies
Of daffodils and roses,
Thy cradle, kingly stranger,
As Gospell tells,
Was nothing else
But here a homely manger.

Another, by Herrick, is entitled

THE STAR-SONG.

The flourish of music; then followed the song.

1st Voice. Tell us, thou cleere and heavenly tongue,
Where is the babe but lately sprung?
Lies he the lillie-banks among?

2nd Voice. Or say, if this new birth of ours
Sleeps, laid within some ark of flowers,
Spangled with dew-light; thou canst clear
All doubts, and manifest the where?

3rd Voice. Declare to us, bright Star, if we shall seek
Him in the morning's blushing cheek;
Or search the beds of spices through,
To find Him out?

Star. No, this ye need not do;
But only come and see Him rest
A princely babe, in's mother's breast.

Chorus. He's seen! he's seen! why then around
Let's kisse the sweet and holy ground.

To Milton's "Hymn on the Nativity" we need only allude once more, as the highest composition that has yet appeared on this subject, beyond all compare. We shall not make any extract from it, as it is within everybody's reach, which the specimens we have quoted from other sources are not.

Those who would seek further information on this subject, and read more of these songs of the olden time, will find abundance (in addition to those authors we have already quoted) in the Sloane, Harleian, and

other MSS. in the British Museum; Ritson's "Ancient Songs," &c. A small, but very choice, collection has recently been brought out by Cundall—bound, of course, according to the most perfect models of the ancient art, with carved boards, embossed covers, and illuminated pages. Those who are desirous of obtaining modern Carols, carefully written to scriptural texts, and adapted to the ancient tunes (the music of which is given), may be amply supplied from a little work published by J. W. Parker, entitled "Christmas Carols, with Appropriate Music," and adorned with a frontispiece, engraved from some picture by one of the old masters; of the beauty of which it is not too much to say, that it is worthy of the subject.

FRIENDS TOGETHER.

A CHRISTMAS CHANT AND CHORUS.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

Friends, together met this day,
In the good old Christmas way,
With its merry pastimes rare,
And its jolly unwholesome fare,
And its fire too good to bear,
And the old amazing noise
Of its young and its old boys,
And the misletoe, which Molly
Hopes will make 'em still more jolly,
And the berries on its holly,
Like delighted Melancholy,
And a world of wise old folly;
Say, oh say! and let the sound
Run this happy circle round,
What's the height, the topmost blessing,
Of the bliss we're thus possessing?
What the crown of Christmas weather?—
Friends together.

CHORUS.

Friends together;
Friends, well met and long together,
That's the crown of Christmas weather.

Friends together! words divine;
Sweetest test of Auld Lang Syne;
First, two small friends, full of glee,
Brotherly and sisterly,
Link'd in those fast-holding hands—
One another's little hands.
Schoolmates then, who, as they pace,
Arms o'er shoulders interlace.
Lovers next, ah! friends indeed,
If their loves their youth exceed
(I have heard that some, for life,
Have been husband call'd, and wife).
Friends like us, then, met in mirth
In a corner of old earth,
And, in spite of earthly leaven,
Hoping we may meet in Heaven;
Hoping there for tearless weather,
Friends together.

CHORUS.

Friends together;
Knowing not a care together,
Such as spots e'en Christmas weather.

Care be welcome, if it be
Comfort's friend, not enemy;
Manhood's nerve, affection's test,
And the work secure of rest;
And to that good end withal,
And the weal of great and small,
Let us rise, sire, one and all;
Not against one right possessor,
Not against the Queen, God bless her!
Not against the very assessor,
If he spare the poor man's dresser;
But with glasses, full and high,
Like the prospect in our eye,
And this wish to drink it by—
May the whole earth, like this table,
Making Christmas faith no fable,
Stand, ere long, in bloodless weather,
Friends together.

CHORUS.

Friends together;
Rain or shine, not caring whether,
Bright in soul, and friends together.

PLUM-PUDDING.—A CHRISTMAS RHAPSODY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY KENNY MEADOWS.

Who, that has lived to years of discretion, or floundered into an age of indiscretion, can say that maturity has ever afforded him such an object of intense gratification and love, as boyhood afforded him in a pudding? Not an ordinary pudding, of apple, cherry, damson, batter, or other every day material, but a PLUM-PUDDING!—the pudding, in fact, before the patrician splendours and true nobility of which all other puddings are vulgar, and of no account. Reader, lay your hand upon your heart, and confess. Have you ever loved anything, in your later years, with the deep devotion you felt for Plum-Pudding when you were but ten or eleven years old? You may have loved some dear Mary, or Ellen, or Louisa, when you were nineteen or twenty; but was the love so all-pervading, so deeply passionate, so utterly engrossing, so insatiable, so long dwelt upon, as your love for pudding? Again I must answer that it was not, and could not have been. You may have loved Mary, or

Ellen, or Louisa, very devotedly, and may even have deluded yourself with the romantic idea that you know what true love is; but if you never loved Plum-Pudding, before you reached your teens, with an unspeakable intensity of delight and fervour, and if you did not long for Christmas with a yearning affection, in order to behold, possess, and enjoy the idol of your stomach (and the stomach, if not the seat of the mind, is very often its master), you have missed an experience of life. You have not loved thoroughly. You are but half a man in the riches of your memory; and no future time can give you such a joy as you have lost. No! there is nothing in after life that yields such unalloyed delight as pudding yields to the boy. Is the man's money worth the boy's pudding? No! The money may be dearly prized, gloated over, and hardly won; but it never did and never can afford the deep satisfaction of pudding. The PLUM acquired by Smith or Jenkins, and upon which he retires into the country, at the age of sixty or thereabouts, to attend to his rheumatism and cultivate his cabbage-garden, does not give him the same fierce joy to think of, and rapturous delight to hold, as the PLUM-PUDDING of that same Smith or Jenkins gave him when he wore a pinafore. The heart is seared and dry as a leaf before the "Plum" is gained. Experience has proved all things to be "vanity and vexation of spirit;" even gold itself; but the heart is fresh and new, and full of all sweet imaginings when Plum-Pudding is the prize.

If money be not comparable to pudding, neither are the other prizes for which men struggle. Fame? Pooh! What is fame in comparison with pudding? Rank? It is preposterous to imagine, if we weigh the delights of the one against the delights of the other, that rank would not kick the beam, and thus show, in the most convincing of modes, the superior weight and solidity of the boy's gratification.

Deep love, as we all know, is allied to sorrow. "The course of true love never did run smooth;" and what sorrow in love is there in that story of the boy, who, upon one delicious Christmas Day, having eaten his fill of pudding, was observed to burst into an uncontrollable passion of tears. "What are you crying for, Johnny?" said his father's guest, who are of Johnny's weakness, or rather of the strength of his affection for pudding; "Because," said Johnny, sobbing vehemently, "I can't eat any more pudding!" "Fill your pockets, my little man!" said his father's guest, with consolatory sympathy and sage advice. "Oh!" replied Johnny, as distinctly as the paroxysm of his mighty tribulation would permit him, "I have! I have!"

Oh happy love, where love like this is found!
Oh heartfelt rapture!—bliss beyond compare!
I've paced much this weary mortal round,
And sage experience bids me thus declare:
If heaven one taste of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis—

'Tis in delicious boyhood, on Christmas Day, when the pudding is served, and a large slice, smoking hot, is put into our plate by our fond mother. To talk of love under a hawthorn tree, in comparison with such delight as that, shows little knowledge of the real sources of enjoyment.

This quotation from Burns reminds me of the loss that literature has sustained in the ignorance of that poet of the merits of Plum-Pudding. He tasted a Scotch pudding—an unshapely, if not unseemly thing, called a "Haggis," and he became inspired. What would his inspiration have been had he known what an English pudding was? Would he then have exclaimed, as he has done, that Haggis was

The great chieftain of the pudding race?

I should think not. Scotchman as he was, he would have degraded Haggis to its proper place, and thought it, treason against the majesty of the real monarch of puddings, to have exalted into his high place so miserable and so plebeian a pretender. "They never saw dainties that think haggis a feast," says a proverb of his country, and like most proverbs it says truly. But

The sturdy Saxon, pudding-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his strong right fist the blade,
He'll make it whistle;
And cut off leg, or arm, or head,
Like top of this tistle!

I have often wondered who invented Plum-Pudding. The name of that benefactor of our species is lost in the night of ages. We may, however, speculate on this subject. It is, doubtless, to a woman that the world is indebted for this glorious discovery. Could she re-visit this earth that she once adorned with her presence, and enlightened with her genius, and see how many homes she makes happy in this Christmas of 1848, and what thousands of dear little boys and girls do honour to her invention, what a felicity she would enjoy. I see her in my mind's eye at this moment, "fat, fair, and forty." She must have been moderately stout, for good-tempered people generally grow to a comfortable rotundity; and good-tempered she most assuredly was, or she could never have compounded so kindly and so genial a mixture as Plum-Pudding. Fair, I am positive she was. In her youth she must have been surpassingly so, and her mind, upon her face, spoke gentle peace, soft contentment, and purest serenity. She had, moreover, a large family of children whom she dearly loved, and who dearly loved her, for her own sake, as well as for the puddings. Then she must have been about forty (rather under, perhaps) when she applied the powers of her mind to the great work which was her appointed mission on earth. Such a work could not have been accomplished without much experience, and deep thought; unless we are to believe (and I would not lightly reject even that theory) that she was inspired for pudding as Shakespeare was for poetry. I feel, and know—though I cannot prove—that she was the model of a good mother, and a happy wife, and the adorer of her kind. I am certain that she was the benefactress of her country. It is a pity that we do not know her name, or any particulars of her history. We cannot even discover as much about her as of Shakespeare's father. The great fact about him is, that he could write his name. Whether she could do so it is impossible to say. Ye literary antiquarians, investigate this matter. What a price her autograph would fetch! The City of London, that bought Shakespeare's autograph at a large price—not without sore grumbling, however, at the extravagance (lost money for City feasts)—would have given a double or a treble price for hers, or pudding is not pudding, and aldermen are not aldermen. Then, the age in which she lived has not yet been ascertained—so little does the world know of its truest and best friends. It seems to me, that the lady must have been a Saxon—a contemporary, probably, of King Alfred. There were pancakes in those days, for Alfred himself cooked, or miscooked them in the shepherd's hut; and if pancake, why not Plum-Pudding? There is something so truly Saxon in the whole compound—strong and sweet, substantial, but not heavy—generous and sufficing, but in no degree stupefying—that Plum-Pudding must be pronounced, on internal evidence, to be an invention of the Saxon mind. The time of Alfred gave us trial by jury—an institution only second to the effects of Plum-Pudding on the English character; and it is very likely that the same age produced both. Trial by Jury, Plum-Pudding, and Shakspeare! these are the triumphs of the Saxon! Do homage to the genius of the inventor of Plum-Pudding! Celebrate her merits, all ye mothers of the land! Love her, all ye little boys and girls! Bow down to her, Miss Acton! Mrs. Rundell! and Mistress Meg Dods, of the Cleikum Inn, St. Ronan's! And M. Soyer, of the Reform Club, confess, with humility, that, did she appear on earth again, you would kneel before her, and ask permission, like a gallant Frenchman, to kiss the ground upon which she trod.

Another theory might be started as to the invention of Plum-Pudding. As it is alleged that Homer did not compose the "Iliad;" that the poem is a kind of pudding of which the materials were furnished by many hands—the plums by one, the spices by another; so it is possible that no one person invented Plum-Pudding. There is a tendency to rob the authors of immortal works of the glory of their handiwork, or brainwork, and to deny even their existence. Many have denied that Homer lived at all; and, in our day, Shakspeare has been treated as a "Myth." Now, if these great names have suffered, I do not see why the inventor of Plum-Pudding should escape unscathed. Happily, however, for her memory, she has no name, or most assuredly it would not have been left unassailed. Obscurity is almost unassailable; nothingness is entirely so.

But we have pondered too long upon the past. Let us fix our thoughts upon the present. In a household where there are five or six children, the eldest not above ten or eleven, the making of the pudding is indeed an event. It is thought of days, if not weeks, before. To be allowed to share in the noble work, is a prize for young ambition. The chief reward for youthful merit in the early days of December, is to be allowed, on the 24th, to assist in picking the plums for that occasion. Little miss, with pride in her heart, and satisfaction in her eyes, sits that day at the table, and says in her soul, "I helped to make it!" The very father of such children, if he deserve pudding himself, shares their pleasure. If he be at all imaginative, all the faculties of the mind may be made available for the love of pudding. He has glorious visions at the very name. *Roisins!* They recall Turkey, and its men with long gowns, black beards, crooked scimitars, dark sparkling eyes, to say nothing of Giaours, Zuleikas, Bulbuls, and gardens of roses. *Current* They suggest Greece, and the Levant, and the old Greek city, which gave their name to these berries. *Spice!* That is still better; the word conjures up all Arabia, all Asia, Sinbad the Sailor, and fine old Haroun-al-Raschid. *Sugar!* The word is suggestive of Jamaica, hot suns, and Old Dan Tucker. *Milk, Eggs, Fresh butter!* These remind him of the country, and of rambles in the fields for buttercups and daisies, when he was a boy, and of many other things which he would not, perhaps, like to unfold in all their completeness to his wife. But this *en passant*. *Flour!* That suggests the sturdy miller, and the mill-stream, and the miller's daughter:—

On the banks of Allan water,
When the sweet spring-time did fall,
Was the miller's lovely daughter,
Fairer of them all.

Lemon-peel! That recalls groves of citrons and oranges. *Suet!* That is the most disagreeable reminiscence; but even that, with a little effort, may be turned to pleasurable account; and the live oxen clumping the sunward hills may do duty for the butcher's shop. But I am wandering from the boys and girls: the pudding is theirs, not their father's. He is to dispense, and pay for it; but cannot expect to enjoy it as they do. He has gone through that phase of existence. He has had his delight, and can only renew it by looking kindly upon theirs. Banished from the kitchen upon all other occasions, the boys and girls are permitted to enter into its precincts on that grand day when the pudding is to be compounded. They are allowed a sight of those inexpressible mysteries. If it be cook that makes the pudding, great is cook, and much to be respected: if it be mother, greater than usual is mother, and dearer to the imaginations of those busy, excited, anxious, and most desirous little ones. But the taking up of the pudding is an event even more important. Lo! the lid is raised, curiosity stands on tip-toe, eyes sparkle with anticipation, little hands are clapped in extacy, almost too great to find expression in words. "The hour arrives—the moment wished and feared;"—wished, oh! how intensely; feared, not in the event, but lest envious fate should not allow it to be an event, and mar the glorious concoction in its very birth. And then when it is dished, when all fear of this kind are over, when the roast beef has been removed, when the pudding, in all the glory of its own splendour, shines upon the table, how eager is the anticipation of the near delight! How beautifully it steams! How delicious it smells! How round it is! A kiss is round, the horizon is round, the earth is round, the moon is round, the sun and stars, and all the host of heaven are round. So is Plum-Pudding. Sharon Turner, in his "History of the World," affirmed the earth itself to be but a Plum-Pudding of a larger growth. It is cast in the type of Eternity. "The eye," says Mr. R. W. Emerson, "is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary figure is repeated without end." The philosopher did not give us pudding as an illustration of his thought; but he might have done so. It is almost a pity that such lovely roundness should be invaded by the ruthless knife; but it must be done. The "expectant wee things" sit and watch. Their eyes glisten; their mouths water. The pudding is divided, and eaten. Let us draw a veil over its ineffable delights. They are to be felt—not written about; and never until the same festival returns, in a twelvemonth, shall anything eatable inspire the same emotion in these youthful hearts.

Let no young reader be tempted by these praises to love pudding "unwisely and too well." Plum-Pudding, like all good things, is to be used and not abused:—

Little fools will eat too much,
But great ones not at all.

And too much pudding on the 25th of December renders necessary the rhubarb and magnesia, or the salts andenna of the 26th. "Punishment," says our philosopher of "Circles," in a wise and beautiful essay upon Compensation, "is a fruit that, unsuspected, ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause." As with all other things, so with that crown of things—a Plum-Pudding. Love it wisely, and it shall love you. Love it unwisely, and you shall pay the penalty.

GRANDPAPA'S PRESENT.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY DUNCAN.

CHRISTMAS benevolence is of a household quality. Moreover, it descends from the oldest to the youngest, and is strong in proportion to its seniority. Children expect from their parents all manner of gifts at Christmas time. "Christmas Presents" is a stereotype advertisement head-rail—an attractive title for the disposal of wares which have hung on hand all the year, but, thus baptized and denominated, gain a prestige which makes them universally attractive to the purchaser. But there is one parent, in particular, to whom children look up with a



MAKING THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING.—DRAWN BY KENNY MEADOWS.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)

culiar sort of expectation, and from whom to receive a gift is, as it ere, to receive a blessing. We allude to the Grandfather. The rela-

tion is a sort of patriarchal one, and the accompanying sentiment is de- vout even to solemnity.

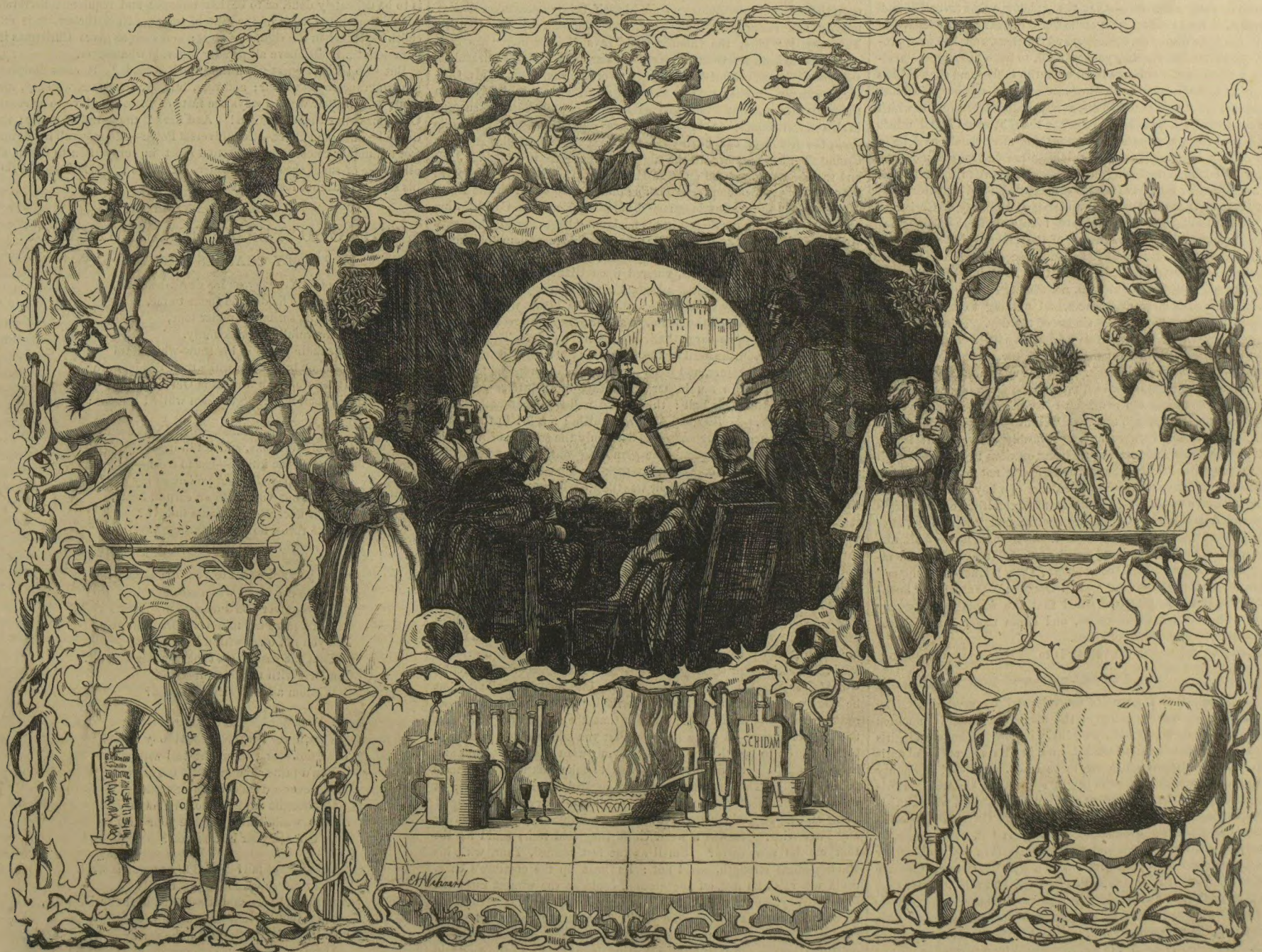
Grandpapa's Present at Christmas, as illustrated by the Artist, is a Hamper, well stuffed with most miscellaneous contents—such a Hamper



TAKING UP THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING.—DRAWN BY KENNY MEADOWS.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)



GRANDPAPA'S CHRISTMAS HAMPER.—DRAWN BY DUNCAN.—(SEE PAGE 403.)



CHRISTMAS SPORTS.—DRAWN BY WEHNERT.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

as might well be called a Hanaper, and esteemed to hold a Royal Exchequer, so rich it seems in all that is good, so boundless in the amount of its wealth. And when it arrives, a Comptroller of the Hanaper would seem to be no inexperienced officer; so riotous is the onset made on the precious casket, and the jewels it enshrines, by the various claimants on its treasury.

The long-expected evening has at length come, when, as usual, the mysterious pannier is brought into the hall of the happy mansion—your's or mine, dear reader?—that is, every man's who is rejoicing in the Wife of his Youth and the Children of his Love. The Parcels' Delivery waggon stops at the door. How well are the sounds of its coming and its stopping known and distinguished! It has not passed by—the knock is heard—it is not designed for a neighbour. It belongs to this house. It is Grandpapa's Hamper!

The mother has said it, and said it with that joy which only mothers know. The father's countenance is also suffused with a smile. At length, the huge burthen is fairly deposited in the passage—with much difficulty is conveyed into the parlour, and found, of course, to be "carriage-paid."

And now comes the sense of mystery—the force of curiosity. What does it contain? That is the question lithographed on the anxious countenances of every child—boy and girl. What eager impatience! what vehement desire! what transport of expectation! When will it be opened? Why should there be a moment's delay? "O, do let us see what there is in it!"

It is opened! Why, it is a basket of baskets! Out with one, out with the other, out with all. Why, here is a basket of game! splendid addition to our Christmas dinner! and here a basket of fruit for the dessert afterwards. The game may be reserved—held sacred until served up by the cook, in due order, in season and place. But the fruit is irresistibly attractive. One boy plunges in his hand, and brings out a bunch of grapes in j y and triumph equal to a conqueror's! And here is a drum of figs! And there are apples, oranges—a countless store of all the season's fruit! Well, right well has grandpapa provided for his grandchildren. And, were he present, how would he delight in the joy which he has thus produced. The laughter of the ocean-waves, still dimpling in the golden sunlight, is comparable only to the ecstasy with which this magnificent gift has illuminated every countenance. On all faces there is the same expression of joy. Father, mother, sister, brother—all harmonise in the same feeling. And he, the author of this rapture, though afar from the spot, we may be certain, still sympathises with the feeling. With a prophetic sentiment, he forefelt the happiness he designed to create; and now, by a mysterious law of communication, it is our belief that he partakes it in this moment of its realisation. At such an hour, said he, the Hamper will reach them! And now that it has done so, the old patriarch notes the time; and, seated in his easy chair, concentrates every thought and feeling on the imagination of a scene, distant, indeed, in space, but never absent from his mind.

"Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

CHRISTMAS SPORTS.

BY UNCLE TOM.

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY EHNERT.

LET me suppose that the Christmas Dinner has been served and eaten—and that the reader has heard so much about Christmas cheer and old English fare as to render unnecessary any further expatiation upon their abundance or their excellence—that the pudding, prime favourite and very symbol, as far as eating is concerned, of the great English festival of the year, has been displayed, steaming and delicious, and has been pronounced by all tasters, whether young or old, to have been super-excellent—that the dessert has been placed upon the table—and that all has been enjoyed that weak human nature can enjoy in the way of edibles and potables: what is next to be done at any comfortable circle, to which the reader is supposed to be invited? The thought arises in all minds—especially in the young ones—that something more should be done in celebration of the day. Eating and drinking are but vulgar modes of enjoyment (and it is astonishing how prone people are to come to this sage conclusion after they have feasted sufficiently)—and something else is therefore to be thought of to keep up the genial hilarity of Christmas Night. What shall it be? I suppose a family circle, the members of which, both young and old, are aware of the claims of the poor and unhappy. They have distributed their bounty, according to their means, among all the needy within reach of it; they have not forgotten the servants that are warm in the kitchen, nor the beggar that is cold at the gate; and they have clear consciences, and nothing to trouble them, either done or undone, for the remainder of the day. The question is asked at such a board as this; and a little musical voice of a boy of eight or nine, or of a girl of six or seven years of age, pronounces in favour of "Snap-Dragon." A voice more musical still, from blushing seventeen, of the softer sex, pronounces for a dance, possibly with some lurking visions of the Mistletoe-Bough; while a rough voice from the less interesting sex flings, that "Hunt-the-Slipper" is a most delightful sport, the sky-speaker, having probably a sweetheart in the room, the "seventeen" aforsaid; and being anxious to come into such close proximity with her as "Hunt-the-Slipper" not only allows, but imperatively commands. Another voice, that of a boy from school, entering upon twelve or thirteen, hints that the exhibition of the Magic Lantern would be the best thing to begin with; and it is decided, after some dubiety all round, that the Magic Lantern shall, first of all, display its wonders to the impatient juveniles; that, if they behave themselves, "Snap-Dragon" shall come next; that "Hunt-the-Slipper" will be a pleasant variety after "Snap-Dragon;" that after "Snap-Dragon" "Forfeits" may be tried; and that the whole festivity may wind up with music and the dance, and kisses under the Mistletoe-Bough, to those who are fond of kisses.

This being agreed to, the next thing is to

Put out the light, and then—

the magic lantern shall display its marvels and its mysteries. The lights are extinguished accordingly; the magic apparatus is mounted, and turned to the darkened wall, and little inquisitive boys and girls look on with almost breathless interest, and in pleased yet fearful anticipation of the revelations which are to be made. Behold! a mighty crocodile floats unwildly over the bright space upon the wall. He is not quite so large as the Sea-Serpent of Captain M'Quib, whose existence has been as logically disproved by Professor Owen, as Napoleon Bonaparte's was by the Archbishop of Dublin; but, nevertheless, he looks very large and voracious, and opens his leathern jaws to swallow remarkable finger in front of him. The nigger has not the presence of mind of Mr. Watterton, to jump upon its back and ride it. He runs away; the crocodile pursues; but at the very moment when he is about to be swallowed up, both pursuer and pursued disappear into nothingness. The figure of a clown, merry as Grimaldi, comes next in rotation. He gambols upon the walls, pursued by a personage no less

tremendous than grim Death himself. The King of Terrors brandishes his fatal dart, and grins horribly, in all the majesty of bone, jaw, skull, and teeth, with which the popular imagination has invested him. He, too, disappears; but his place is not left vacant. A figure somewhat more graceful and agreeable succeeds. It is Columbine—fresh, agile, and beautiful. At her feet, soliciting her smile, kneels our old friend Bottom, the weaver, his ass's head firmly fixed upon his shoulders. He has followed her from Titania's bower, to sue for the love that has long been promised to that identical Harlequin who comes next, kneeling at the feet of Queen Victoria. Titania follows, and dances a jig with Richard III., while Paganini, fiddling with might and main, ushers in Lady Macbeth and the King of the Cannibal Islands. And, last of all, comes a more coherent story, the whole adventures of Jack the Giant-Killer; that hero dear to all boys who have a particle of generosity and imagination in their souls. Does there exist a man who never envied Jack his seven-league boots and his invisible coat, and who never laughed at that inimitable trick by which he made the gluttonous, false-hearted Welsh giant commit suicide? If there do exist such a man, he is like the man who hath no music in his soul, and is most assuredly

Fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils.

Let no such man be trusted. He may possibly make his way in the world—he may pay his bills when they become due—he may be an alderman or a sheriff; he may die and leave money to endow an hospital; he may do all the fine things that wealthy men can do, but he will not be a kindly man; he will not lead a forlorn hope, or put himself out of his way to be of striking and paramount service to anybody;—he will not set the Thames on fire, put his name to a bill to serve his friend, or do anything very chivalrous, romantic, foolish, or generous. No. The man who did not, when a boy, admire Jack the Giant-Killer, and sympathise, at the same time, with the woes, and rejoice in the good fortune of Jack who climbed the bean-stalk is a hard, dry man, with no poetry in his composition; and does not deserve to see Jack reproduced even in a magic lantern.

But this digression over, turn we to the giant of our lantern, and behold him struggling in the pit which Jack has dug for him, and which, as we all know, the cunning hero has covered over with turfs, rushes, straw, and loose earth—a flimsy covering upon which the unsuspecting monster has no sooner set his foot than down he goes—deep—deep—deeper—irretrievably deep—to be decapitated at the leisure of his daring conqueror. Behold how his jaws open, capacious enough to swallow Jack, boots and all! How his hair bristles on his head—each individual hair standing upright, not like the quills on the porcupine, but tall as a pine-tree of the forest. See how his eyes glare portentously large, like the broad disc of the orb of day shining, of a bright copper colour through the dense spoon-meat of a metropolitan fog in the month of November! For the benefit of this particular exhibition of his prowess, Jack has doffed his invisible coat, that he may be seen of all the world; and has donned his seven-league boots, that he may scamper faster than the wind; over hill, over dale over bog, over brake, over river and lake, and pass over a whole city at one bound! O boots of delightful memory! How often, in the days ere the beard grows, and ere the young heart learns to think that it belongs to a man, does Fancy, believing in your existence, long to get possession of you. Would we not astonish the good people of the nineteenth century, with our boots and our spurs! Would we, also, not kill giants and rescue distressed damsels! I should think we would—or we should not have the stuff in us, which enters largely into the formation of the true gentle-

man. Jack's adventures, it may not be known to all readers, are founded upon the old Norse mythology; Jack himself being a personage no less mighty and remarkable than Thor, the godfather of our English Thursday. "Thor, the thunder God," says Mr. Carlile, "has been changed into Jack the Giant-Killer of our nurseries, with his miraculous shoes of swiftness, coat of darkness, and sword of sharpness." Mr. Carlile says truly. "They are one and the same, with this difference in their adventures, that Thor, god as he was, did not always succeed in his undertakings, or in his warfare against the giants; while Jack, the friend of our boyhood, is invariably successful." And, on closing the magic lantern for the night, having seen the last of Jack and the giants, it may be an agreeable variety in the amusements to hear another story of Jack's, or Thor's failures, recorded from the Norse Mythology, in the quaint language of our good friend, Mr. Carlile, who, among the other heroes deified in his book on "Hero-worship," speaks with much unction of Jack, under his more grandiloquent name of Thor.

"After various adventures," says he, "Thor, accompanied by Thialfi and Loke, his servants, entered upon Giantland, and wandered over plains, wild uncultivated places, among stones and trees. At nightfall they noticed a house; and, as the door, which indeed formed one whole side of the house, was open, they entered. It was a simple habitation—one large hall, altogether empty. They stayed there. Suddenly, in the dead of the night, loud voices alarmed them. Thor grasped his hammer, and stood in the doorway, prepared for fight. His companions within ran hither and thither in their terror, seeking some outlet in that rude hall: they found a little closet at last, and took refuge there. Neither had Thor any battle; for, lo! in the morning it turned out that the noise had been only the snoring of a certain enormous, but peaceable, giant—the giant Skrymir, who lay peacefully sleeping near by; and this that they took for a house was merely his glove thrown aside there: the door was the glove-wrist; the little closet they had fled into was the thumb! Such a glove! I remark, too, that it had not fingers, as ours have; but only a thumb, and the rest undivided—a most ancient, rustic glove!

"Skrymir now carried their portmanteau all day; Thor, however, had his suspicions, did not like the ways of Skrymir, and determined at night to put an end to him as he slept. Raising his hammer, he struck down into the giant's face a right thunderbolt blow, of force to rend rocks. The giant merely awoke, rubbed his cheek, and said, 'Did a leaf fall?' Again Thor struck, as soon as Skrymir again slept, a better blow than before; but the giant only murmured, 'Was that a grain of sand?' Thor's third stroke was with both his hands (the knuckles white, I suppose), and seemed to cut deep into Skrymir's visage; but he merely checked his snore, and remarked, 'There must be sparrows roosting in this tree, I think; what is that they have dropped?' At the gate of Utgard—a place so high, that you had to strain your neck bending back to see the top of it—Skrymir went his way. Thor and his companions were admitted; invited to take share in the games going on. To Thor, for his part, they handed a drinking-horn; it was a common feat, they told him, to drink this dry at one draught. Long and fiercely, three times over, Thor drank, but made hardly any impression. He was a weak child, they told him; could he lift that cat he saw there? Small as the feat seemed, Thor, with his whole godlike strength, could not: he bent up the creature's back, could not raise its feet off the ground, could at the utmost raise one foot. 'Why, you are no man,' said the Utgard people; 'there is an old woman that will wrestle you.' Thor, heartily ashamed, seized this haggard old woman, but could not throw her. And now, on their quitting Utgard—the chief Jotun, escorting them politely a little way, said

to Thor—'You are beaten, then; yet, be not so much ashamed: there was deception of appearance in it. That horn you tried to drink was the sea; you did make it ebb: but who could drink that, the bottomless? The cat you would have lifted—why, that is the Midgard Snake, the Great World Serpent—which, tail in mouth, girds and keeps up the whole created world. Had you torn that up, the world must have rushed to ruin. As for the old woman, she was Time, Old Age, Duration: with her, what can wrestle? No man, nor no god, with her. Gods or men, she prevails over all! And then, those three strokes you struck—look at these valleys—your three strokes made these.' Thor looked at his attendant Jotun—it was Skrymir. It was say old critics, the old chaotic rocky earth in person, and that glove house was some earth cavern! But Skrymir had vanished. Utgard with its sky-high gates, when Thor raised his hammer to smite them had gone to air, only the giant's voice was heard mocking: 'Better come no more to Jotunheim!'

And, with this fine legend, I leave Jack to the better acquaintance of all who desire to know his true history, the more especially as time fails us in consequence of the preparations having commenced for Snap-Dragon. The large pewter dish, filled with spirit, is placed upon the floor, and attracts the attention of all the party. The light is applied—the flame burns beautifully azure, tipped with amber and scarlet, and whisks and frisks in a manner delightful to the joyous eyes of infancy and childhood to contemplate. All children have a hankering after fire. Its beauty charms and fascinates their sight, but rarely are they allowed to look save at a respectful distance, and never except at Christmas are they permitted to toy with flames. But the dangerous and too-beautiful sport is legalized for this one night, and for this only; and the pleasure, great in proportion to its rarity, causes their eyes to glow with a brilliancy almost equal to that of flame itself. Throw in the plums. The spirit burns, the dish is a lake of fire; and he who can gather the prize from the jaws of peril, is welcome to it. "Fortune favours the bold." "Faint heart never won a plum." These are the maxims upon which those must act who expect to win the honours or the rewards of Snap-Dragon, and of human life also. The prizes however, are but small in Snap-Dragon—the glory and the excitement are in the circumstances under which they are sought—like fox-hunting, in which there is next to nothing to be gained by the paltry animal pursued; but much to be gained in the lusty jollity and pleasurable exercise of the pursuit itself. But while the youngest members of a Christmas party are at first more enamoured of Snap-Dragon than of any of the other sports of the night, they weary of it after awhile; and on small solicitation consent to join in the somewhat less boisterous, but equally exhilarating game, of Hunt-the-Slipper, and share the delight of those who are a few years their seniors. The frolic is of a different kind; and morose and unsocial must those be that never enjoyed it. It is not a little amusing to note the struggle with pride that sometimes assumes a place upon the countenances of middle-aged and old people when they are pressed into the service of Hunt-the-Slipper, and how at last the solemn man of business, and the staid matron, yield to the solicitations and to the example of the lighter-hearted folk around them, and, with comic gravity sit down on the floor and play their part in the game. A grave sergeant-at-law, or the elderly author of an incomparable and incomprehensible treatise upon metaphysics, or a spectacled physician of sixty sitting upon his hams on a carpet, and passing the slipper under them with all the dexterity, if not with all the glee, of a school-boy, is a sight to be enjoyed. Christmas alone affords it; and Christmas is none the worse the day after, in the estimation of these sober and sensible people for having taken them off their stilts, and given them a new and pleasant lesson in the humanities.

Kissing Under the Mistletoe-Bough is a sport of a tenderer kind. It is to be delicately done, or to be left undone; and requires a discretion which almost lifts it out of the rank of sports. Nevertheless, it is excellent sport when the right lips meet; and such as gives Christmas its paramount interest above all popular festivals whatsoever.

But who talks of sport when the Punch is made? It casts its pleasant fragrance upon the air; and rum, brandy, schiedam, whiskey, and wine, woo in their various ways the taste of those who love to celebrate Christmas after the old fashion! And hark! the sound of music: the dance begins; and Polka—the universal Polka—summons all hands and feet to another celebration; and to a sport in comparison to which all others are of small account. Reader, let us go; Uncle Tom has said his say. He cannot resist the Polka!

THE OLD YEAR'S REMONSTRANCE.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

The Old Year lay on his death-bed lone,
And ere he died he spoke to me,
Low and solemn in under tone,
Mournfully, reproachfully.
The fading eyes in his snow-white head
Shone bright the while their lids beneath;
These were the words the Old Year said—
I shall never forget them while I breathe:—

"Did you not promise, when I was born"—
Sadly he spoke, and not in ire—
"To treat me kindly—not to scorn—
And to pay the debt you owed my sire?
Did you not vow, with an earnest heart,
Your unconsidered hours to live?
And to throw no day in waste away,
Of my three hundred sixty-five?"

"Did you not swear to your secret self,
Before my beard was a second old,
That whatever you'd done to my fathers gone,
You'd prize my minutes more than gold?
Did you not own, with a keen regret,
That the past was a time of waste and sin?
But that with me, untainted yet,
Wisdom and duty should begin?"

"Did you not oft the vow renew
That never with me should folly dwell?
That, however Fate might deal with you,
You'd prize me much, and use me well?
That never a deed of scorn or wrath,
Or thought unjust of your fellow men,
Should, while I lived, obscure your path,
Or enter in your heart again?"

Did you not fail?"—but my tongue was weak
Your sad shortcomings to recall:
And the old year sobbed—he could not speak—
He turn'd his thin face to the wall.
"Old Year! Old Year! I have done you wrong—
Hear my repentance ere you die!"

Linger awhile!" Ding-dong—ding-dong—
The joy-bells drowned his parting sigh.

"Old Year! Old Year!" he could not hear,
He yielded placidly his breath.
I loved him little while he was here,
I prized him dearly after death.
New Year! now smiling at my side:
Most bitterly the past I rue.
I've learned a lesson since he died,
I'll lead a better life with you.

THE STREETS AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

BY THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARVEY AND FOSTER.

OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS is a great receiver of goods. Our Artist has depicted him on his throne, receiving the offerings of his subjects. Doves of oxen, of sheep, and of pigs; flocks of geese and turkeys; men and carts laden with all descriptions of game in season; carts of fish; baskets of fruits and vegetables; barrels of ale and wine—all are proceeding to the feet of the King of Good Cheer. Boys and girls are rushing pell mell from school, delighted at the prospect of catching a glimpse of his jolly and kindly face.

For a few weeks before Christmas the streets of London begin to assume a new aspect. It is not in Regent-street, or Oxford-street, or the fashionable streets where linendrapers, jewellers, and other traders who administer to fashion and to all the wants and adornments of the outward man or woman reside, that the change is perceptible. Such streets are uniformly cheerful. Such shops are always luxuriant, and always display to the greatest possible advantage the commodities upon which their owners thrive. To them all seasons are alike. Christmas and Midsummer, Spring or Autumn, sees them equally attractive. The jeweller's shop is splendid of necessity; the mercer but changes from muslins and cottons to silks and satins, and from these to woollen textures and furs, according to the season; but it is in the minor streets, inhabited by dealers in eatables of all kinds that the approach of Christmas is manifested by outward and visible signs, about which there can be no mistake. Regent-street is too proud to show any symptoms of rejoicing at Christmas; but more homely Tottenham-court-road puts on a new face for the occasion, and decks herself out with attractions never thought of at any other time. Oxford-street would scorn to be too Christmas-like; but her tributary streets on either side, except those sombre and highly-respectable streets in which there are no shops, look upon Christmas as an era, and rejoice accordingly.

The immense increase of population in London has not only led to the multiplication of these signs of Christmas, but to a greater competition among shop-keepers to attract notice. London is not merely a city. It may be called a nation. Any one who would wish to examine the manners and customs of its people could have no better opportunity for the purpose than Christmas. It is to be questioned whether he could have any so good. Formerly—say thirty or forty years ago—ingenuity was not much taxed to tempt the purchasers of good things. People knew it was Christmas without being told so by advertisements, and knew where to go for the commodities they required to celebrate the festival, without any announcement by placard or hand-bill; but year after year, up to the present period, the rivalry of business consequent upon the immense number of streets opened up in all quarters, and the establishment of thousands of new shops in almost every parish, the old shop-keepers have been gradually compelled to resort to something like publicity to preserve their custom.

Among shops, those of the butchers stand pre-eminent, and give us prospects not alone of the good feeding for which December is famous, but of the good lighting that we may expect in January and February. Old Father Christmas has a capacious stomach; and the maw of London—not easily filled at any time—becomes all but insatiable towards the close of the year. The droves of oxen in the streets—a nuisance which has antiquity in its favour, but nothing else—increase in numbers—and in the bulk of the animals that form them. The future dinners, as well as the future candles of the million, wend their way to Smithfield, in all but countless multitudes. The butchers shops soon give evidence of the new demand that is certain to spring up. Beef rises twenty per cent. in value, and mutton at a somewhat smaller ratio, as soon as the carcasses of prize animals are displayed in the great thoroughfares of the people. Prince Albert's oxen, and the Earl of Leicester's sheep, or other animals bred by celebrated agriculturists, are exhibited—the oxen in portions, and the sheep whole, with labels upon them, pointing out to the admiring crowds that gather around the shops, the place where, and the owner by whom they were fed, as well as the amount of prize they obtained. In many instances the carcasses are adorned with ribbons, or wreaths, and in almost all cases with sprigs of holly. It is a glorious time for the butchers of London. There is a vastly increased supply, and there is a vastly increased demand; and these tradesmen contrive, upon what principle is "a mystery of London" never thoroughly explained, to make an extra profit of both circumstances. Suet which, in those quiet and ordinary times when suet is neither abundant nor scarce, fetches 8d. a pound rises to a shilling, when all the world is bent upon making plum-pudding. Happy, sometimes, is the housewife that can obtain it even at that price. But it is not only in meat—there is, in fact, a general rise in the price of all agricultural produce at this time. Butter, for which it cannot be supposed there is any extra demand, or any diminished supply at Christmas, is an instance of it. The price is increased by twopence or threepence a pound, as every house-keeper knows—although she may not be able to account for it on any known principles either of political or domestic economy. The reason may be that the buttermilk, having to pay an extra sum to the butcher, takes it out of the pockets of the public. The butcher, too, may plead that he has to pay extra to the agriculturist for the flesh that Londoners will consume: so that the farmer and grazier, after all, may be the grant recipients of the profits or the plunder of Christmas. Beef eating London must submit, even although it grumble. The infliction, it is to be feared, is wholly irremediable.

Next to the butchers' shops, the porkmen's, the poulterers', and the dealers in game are the most crowded with the future good cheer of the London nation. If the streets of the metropolis give unpleasant evidence of the living beef and mutton that are to be offered up at the shrine of old Father Christmas, they give evidence equally strong, and a vast deal more pleasant, of the old gentleman's capabilities in the way of game and poultry. The porkmen may be passed over; they share the good fortune of Christmas like their neighbours. But the dealers in domestic poultry, and in game of all descriptions, reap a more abundant harvest; and offer more tempting inducements for the expenditure of the million. The family that never taste game or poultry at any other period of the year indulge themselves in it at Christmas, and chickens, geese, and turkeys, dead and alive, are despatched to the metropolis to help in the honors of Christmas, in numbers commensurate with the magnitude of the city and the joviality of the occasion. While

poultry, which is bought, has its thousands and tens of thousands of purchasers—game, which is given away, has also its thousands and tens of thousands of grateful recipients. Blessed is the London family that has friends in the country. Blessed at Christmas time is he who has a relative or friend who loves sport, and who, knowing how to enjoy his sport, knows quite as well how to cultivate friendship, and render relationship agreeable. To him comes the welcome present from the fields, the moors, or the mountains; and for him the railways bear the welcome gifts from all quarters of the land. This large portion of the Christmas consumption of the metropolis does not grace the shops. It is only to be seen in its transit from the railway station to the houses of the grateful recipients; but a portion equally large finds its way to the dealers. In the days of stage and mail-coaches, it was a pleasant sight to see how picturesquely they were loaded; but the railway which does more business, does it without a tithe of the display. All game is not given away; would it were; but a goodly share of it becomes merchandize, and is set forth with tempting beauty in the shops. The butchers' shops may be disgusting, and the *are* so to all who think upon the subject (which, however, the majority of man and woman-kind do not); but the shop of the dealer in game cannot be considered repulsive. The victims of our appetite which he supplies are not always stripped of their beautiful plumage, and the pheasant dead is only less lovely than the pheasant alive. Even poor puss, the hare, with her warm jacket on, suggests no ideas akin to those which are felt on the contemplation of the joints that hang from the rafters of the butcher's shop. *Mais, ne revenons pas à nos moutons!*

But far more attractive than those of the game-dealers are the shops of the grocers. The grocers look upon Christmas as their peculiar time, and they take all due pains to set themselves forth in their fairest trim. Neither do they take such advantage of the day as the dealers in home agricultural produce. The grocers provide large and abundant stores of raisins, currants, spices, and preserved fruits, and put no additional price upon them. On the contrary, they often ask less for their wares than at other seasons—a piece of good generalship on their parts, which our friends the flesh-dealers might imitate with advantage to themselves as well as to the public. The grocers are not greedy. They encourage the manufacture of pudding. Their pleasant and wholesome shops, which meet the eye in all our great thoroughfares, are shrines to which the devotees of Christmas pay a willing visit. Many are their devices to attract notice. Sometimes a flag is displayed from the first-floor windows, or the whole front of the house is beplastered with placards, announcing the arrival of millions of pounds of currants and raisins, all for the use of the pudding-loving people, and to be obtained within at prices defying competition. One placard, exhibited this year by a grocer, is in the form of a play-bill, announcing the production of a new pantomime, to be called "Harlequin Peel; or, the Magic Pudding." This is not intended as a political sneer at a great statesman, though at first glance it would seem suggestive of such an idea. It is simply a social and domestic affair to attract customers. Sometimes the grocer gives his customers the additional attractions of a pictorial pudding in his window, with the figure of a sturdy John Bull, surrounded by his family, cutting into the dainty. His face is redolent of good humour, and a scroll issuing from his mouth informs all men (sometimes in a couplet of choice doggerel) that the plums and spices of which that pudding was compounded were bought at Mr. Snooks's or Mr. Jones's, or whatever the name may be of the enterprising trader. Very often, a long string of rhymes, almost as good as those remarkable lyrics with which Mr. Moses and his poets amuse the public, is printed in large type, and affixed to the grocer's door-post, that all who run may read. Indeed, of late years, the majority of grocers in crowded streets think it necessary to become poetical. "There's a good time coming, boys," says one effusion of the kind which has this year made its appearance. "There's a good time coming—Raisins will be cheap at Robinson's!" while a rival grocer, on the other side of the way, has put up a placard with the more delightful announcement, "The good time has come, boys—Raisins are cheap at Smith's!"

The grocers, and the keepers of those compound establishments—half grocers and half Italian warehouses—have of late years very much increased their trade by large importations of preserved fruits. The English, as a people, do not excel in this manufacture; but the French and Italians, who have long been famous for it, improve in it every year. The English demand that has arisen, and which this Christmas seems to be greater than ever it was, will doubtless give a further impetus to their ingenuity. It is worth while to spend a few hours in the shop of a large importer of these elegant articles—not merely for the sake of the fruits themselves, crystallised and encrusted, but for a sight of the boxes in which they are packed. The French priests used for the purpose have long been celebrated for their beauty and fancy; and the boxes in which plums, and those delicious little oranges known as "Chinois" are packed, are worth preserving for their own sakes, after the fruit has been consumed. Some of the larger receptacles are fit to convert into work-boxes, after they have served their original intention; and many are prepared with a view to such a purpose. In these times it might be worth the while of capitalists to devote their attention to the home manufacture of these articles, and also to the preservation of fruits. Sugar is as cheap in England as in France, and there is no reason why jams and marmalade, good as they are, should be the sole products of English industry as regards the preservation of fruit.

The most pleasing, as well as the most common, symptom of Christmas in the streets, is the holly displayed in shops of every kind wherever eatables or drinkables are sold, and which is almost invariably to be seen at kitchen windows for a week or two before and after Christmas-day. Love in the kitchen could not prosper without the holly; and the policeman, in search of affection, or of cold mutton, would think the kitchen of his "fair friend" unseasonable in its appearance, if the sprigs of dark green, intermingled with the bright red berries, were absent from the window. The holly-cart, of which a most admirable representation is given in our engraving, is also a pleasant sight in the streets—either of the outskirts of the metropolis, as represented by the artist—or of the dense heart of the old city. Holly is a great article of commerce at Christmas time, and yields a good profit both to those who cultivate it and those who vend it in the streets. Never was it more in request than it is now; never may it be less sought after, as the verdant symbol of the loving-kindness of the season!

There is one other aspect of the streets of London at Christmas, which requires notice, the more especially as this year it is painfully prominent. The public heart being open at Christmas, beggars usually venture out, with more certain hope of our charity than at other times. Nor is their hope disappointed. To say nothing of the carol singers—who seem to look upon themselves as privileged for the sake of the old familiar chant which they musically or unmusically pour into our ears, and who, of all ages and of both sexes, swarm in every street, in numbers of which an accurate estimate would convey a somewhat alarming idea of the poverty of London—troops of unmusical beggars have made their appearance in the streets this year, in numbers surpassing all precedent of experience. Ireland has evidently contributed a large portion to this multitude of misery; and the mind is driven to reflect, amid the gaiety and joviality of the time, not only upon the pauperism of that unhappy land but of

the pauperism of this, which is made more wretched by the influx of these interlopers. The pauperism of England amounts to one million four hundred thousand people. The Irish vagrants that come over to take their chance amongst us cannot amount to many less than three hundred thousand—and, possibly, they amount to many more—forming an aggregate of one million and three quarters. When we fancy that this is almost equal to the whole population of London, Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, Finsbury, Marylebone, the Tower Hamlets, Kensington, Hammersmith, Greenwich, and Woolwich—and when we attempt to realise to our mind how vast a multitude this is, and how fearful it would be if it were all congregated together in one place, we are compelled to ask if there be not something radically wrong in our civilisation, which not only permits the growth of such a sore in the body politic, but which actually favours its growth. Let the minds of our great thinkers be directed to it. The chief difficulty of a time not far distant, will be the existence and maintenance of this immense standing army of poverty. If there ever be a time when it is the duty of individuals to attempt to relieve it, that time is Christmas. At a period of feasts, when the paupers in the Union Workhouses are embraced in the large circle of our sympathies, and cared for a little more liberally than usual, let us draw a circle around the circle, and include within it the beggars in the streets. It may be wrong, as a rule, to encourage street beggars by donations of any kind; but Christmas is an exceptional period; and though, possibly, in being charitable to all, we may be charitable to many worthless persons, the good Will and the good Day Will consecrate the deed. At least, although political theorists may dissent—and although the man who paid a very heavy poor's-rate yesterday may see reason to be unconvinced, such is the opinion until Christmas has passed—of

THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

FETCHING HOME THE CHRISTMAS DINNERS.

BY COUSIN CHARLES.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY LEECH.

"SOMETHING poetical is required about this Engraving—representing Londoners fetching home their Christmas Dinner." Such was the request made to us. Poetical? thought we. It is all very well to ask for poetry—but where is it to come from?—how is it to be extracted from such a subject as that? Look at that comfortable young man for instance, with the self-satisfied expression upon his vulgar countenance—he in the very middle—and declare, oh! ye powers that preside at the birth of all things beautiful, what can be said of such a snob? Yet, why not? Have not good, ay, and poetical, articles been written about sticks and broomsticks? Are there not sermons in stones? Have they not been written and preached? Did not Béranger, the illustrious songster of the French, write beautifully about a little salt that was overset at table? and did not Burns write as beautifully about a mouse? and about a smaller creature, with a name only differing from a mouse's by a single letter? Have there not been poems about grass, and floating straws? Is not a grain of sand prolific of ideas to the man who has ideas in his head? And cannot a man with a full mind write well about anything? Not that we pretend to have a full mind, though we do flatter ourselves that it is not altogether empty. However that may be—and it is a delicate and difficult question, which we do not intend to go into—is the subject of the Christmas Dinners of the People so very bad, after all? Is it not, on the contrary, a very good subject? On looking at the Engraving again, behold the poetry stares us in the face. If we seek it, we find it. If we are determined to be pleased, how easily we can become so. It is not every day in the week or year that the poor can dine; and however vulgar may be the snob that arrays himself in his best on Christmas Day and brings home his dinner steaming hot from the convenient shop of Rusk, the baker, it would be both churlish and snobbish in us, or any one else, to look with unsympathetic eyes, or turn up our noses contemptuously, upon the harmless and well-won enjoyment that is expressed upon his countenance. Has he not earned his dinner like a man? Has he not a right to the enjoyment of it? Is Christmas not a day of good tidings for him as well as for his supererogatory fellow-mortals who has a score of servants to wait on him? And why should we call him a snob? A man with such a smile on his face must have paid for his dinner—must have earned it by his honest industry—must be in the proper mood of mind and frame of body to relish it, and derive advantage from it—must be at peace with himself and with all mankind—must have allowed the odours of Christmas to pervade his whole being, and lift him from one short day into a more refined appreciation of his life and duties than is customary with him. We retract, therefore, the word snob. There is nothing in the dinner, in the mode of fetching it, in the place in which it was cooked, or in the man himself, that will justify us in affixing the epithet to so honest a fellow. Doubtless, he has a wife at home in their one little room on the two-pair front—a wife who has no kitchen, and who is obliged to make use of that good Mr. Rusk's upon all such great occasions as Sundays and Christmases; but who, being without a kitchen, and without worldly wealth, is not necessarily without a heart. A good appetite to them both, and many happy returns of the jovial season. No poetry in such a subject? Look at that venerable old lady—the occupant, doubtless, of an attic, or two-pair back, in some squallid street hard by. Does she not seem impressed with the happiness of the day? Is she not one of those who, for once in the year, are permitted to throw off care, and drink a little deeper than hard-rape, will usually allow at the fountain of enjoyment? Doubtless, in her humble household, one awaits her coming, with whom her modest feast is to be shared. It is clear that she has guests this day. She does not dine alone at Christmas. That joint, small as it is, has been prepared for more than one—perhaps for a son, or grandson, or an old husband, feeble and more aged than herself, but not so feeble or so aged as to have lost all interest in a day so dear to all Londoners, if not to all Englishmen. Upon them, too, may Christmas look genially; and may they never, as long as they live, lack their Christmas dinner, or appetites to enjoy it. And that decent old gentleman, too (who puts us in mind of our old friend and acquaintance, Trotty Veck) with what satisfaction he seems to reflect that Christmas has not come round without putting the means in his pocket to be jolly as well as his neighbours! As for the little boy with the Gengarry bonnet and the short trousers—proof alike of his poverty and of his growth—the mode in which he carries the pie, and the look of intense hunger as well as of deep admiration which he bestows upon it, is proof positive of a foregone conclusion in his mind that he will do more delightful duty to the pie than that of carrying it in his hands. We fear, however, from the shortness of his trousers, which is symptomatic of a household not so overburdened with means as it is with children, that he will not be allowed *carte blanche* at the dainty. Nevertheless



THE CHRISTMAS HOLLY CART.—DRAWN BY FOSTER.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)

what he receives he will, most assuredly, enjoy—and we trust he may. But, amid our good wishes, let us not forget to bestow some of them on that tidy and buxom daughter of the people, who trips along with the family dinner with all the elasticity of youth and good spirits. She has, doubtless, helped her mother to prepare the dinner. She is initiated already in the mysteries of cooking and of housekeeping. For her the day will assuredly be one of enjoyment. She is at the period of 'life when leisure is sweet. And after dinner this day there will be leisure for her for a walk with some one nameless—a walk to Highgate or Hampstead, perhaps; or through the Squares, or down Regent-

street, or into St. James's Park, or to the Serpentine; anywhere for the sake of the walk, and the society of him who is to share with her both her Christmas walk and that longer walk of life of which marriage is the starting-point, and the tomb the termination. May the road between the two be long and sweet! and may they come to the inevitable terminus prepared with good consciences! And oh! thou sweet little girl at the potato-can—forgive us that we have omitted to take notice of thee sooner. We saw thee and thy kind action from the very first, and loved the subject for thy sake. Were there no other poetry in it than thy gentle and pitying face

there would be quite enough to hallow it in our estimation. The near companionship of misery has made thee compassionate. Sorrow and want have been close enough to thee to make thee familiar with their harsh features, and to fill thee with a sympathy which none can feel so deeply as those who have themselves suffered. We mean no disparagement to the lords of the creation; but we do say, that if a boy and not a girl had presided over that potato-can, the ragged and starving little urchin who has received the humble but welcome donation of a potato from the hands of that sweet girl, would have received neither pity nor relief. The girl's heart is ever precocious. The



FETCHING HOME THE CHRISTMAS DINNER.—DRAWN BY LEECH.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)



CHRISTMAS TREE AT WINDSOR CASTLE.—DRAWN BY J. L. WILLIAMS.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

boy is usually a selfish animal; but the girl (blessings on all girls, big or little!) has sympathies alive and vigorous at an age when the boy has none. That charming girl has no Christmas Dinner herself; for her, no steaming joint; for her, no pudding; she is out in the streets gaining a few pence by the sale of her humble merchandise, and will make her dinner in the streets off some of the potatoes which she is endeavouring to sell; but she sees one before her more wretched than herself, and her heart being open as day to melting charity, she furtively bestows her scanty alms upon a need that is much greater than her own. Yes, we saw her from the first. We have been thinking of her ever since we began writing; and we have reserved her and her good deed for the climax of our article. If there be no poetry in her pale and interesting face, and in the heavenly charity of which she has been the instrument, there is no poetry in truth, and no truth in poetry. May she be saved from all the perils of mighty London! May that kind heart be her blessing, and not her bane; and may the poor who are kind to the poor find times grow better every succeeding Christmas.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

THE Christmas Tree represented in the above Engraving is that which is annually prepared by her Majesty's command for the Royal children. Similar trees are arranged in other apartments of the Castle for her Majesty, his Royal Highness Prince Albert, her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, and the Royal household. The tree employed for this festive purpose is a young fir about eight feet high, and has six tiers of branches. On each tier, or branch, are arranged a dozen wax tapers. Pendent from the branches are elegant trays, baskets, *boubonnières*, and other receptacles for sweetmeats, of the most varied and expensive kind; and of all forms, colours, and degrees of beauty. Fancy cakes, gilt gingerbread and eggs filled with sweetmeats, are also suspended by variously-coloured ribbons from the branches. The tree, which stands upon a table covered with white damask, is supported at the root by piles of sweets of a larger kind, and by toys and dolls of all descriptions, suited to the youthful fancy, and to the several ages of the interesting scions of Royalty for whose gratification they are displayed. The name of each recipient is affixed to the doll, bonbon, or other present intended for it, so that no difference of opinion in the choice of dainties may arise to disturb the equanimity of the illustrious juveniles. On the summit of the tree stands the small figure of an angel, with outstretched wings, holding in each hand a wreath. Those trees are objects of much interest to all visitors at the Castle, from Christmas Eve, when they are first set up, until Twelfth Night, when they are finally removed. During this period two trees of similar magnitude and general design stand on the sideboard of the Royal Dining-room, and present a brilliant appearance when all the tapers are lighted up, among the branches. These trees are not accessible to the curiosity of the public; but her Majesty's visitors accompany the Queen from room to room to inspect them when they are illuminated. Her Majesty's tree is furnished by his Royal Highness Prince Albert, whilst that of the Prince is furnished according to the taste of her Majesty. The other trees are jointly provided by her Majesty and the Prince, who plan and arrange the gifts on the table. The trees are constructed and arranged by Mr. Mawditt, the Queen's confectioner.

As the exhibition of the Christmas Tree is somewhat more of a German than an English custom, we present our readers with the following sketch by the author of "Orion," which will throw some light upon the festive purposes for which they are employed in Germany:—

A GERMAN CHRISTMAS TREE.

BY R. H. HORNE.

THE bright-eyed holiday children's "Christmas Tree" possesses everywhere the same general characteristics of fabulous splendour; but, as all these Trees are the product of imagination, their varieties are infinite, and in accordance with the individual mind of the "growers," and also with the length of their pockets. We will describe the last of these delightfully impossible specimens of the horticultural science, at the ceremony of whose verdant illumination we happened to be present. It was at the country-house of Dr. Claudius Shillingkrite, of Cologne.

All the sons, daughters, nephews, and nieces of Dr. Claudius Shillingkrite, together with many juvenile friends, down to little boys and girls of four and five years old, were assembled in the court-yard of the Doctor's house on Christmas-eve, which was white all over with snow. In the centre stood a gigantic Man of Snow, which the elder boys had been engaged, during the last three days, in making and setting up in an attitude, intended to be of great dignity. His dark and expressive eyes were formed of two large coals; a small bush covered with icicles made his beard. In his breast was a huge bouquet of mistletoe and red holly-berries. Hand-in-hand the children all danced about him in a circle, raced round and round him in a joyous whirl, and then leaped up and down, and shouted and sang. Every year they were indulged with a *Weihnachts-feier* (Christmas festival) of the most enchanting kind.

It was now evening; and as the shades of the sky grew more dusky, the elder boys and two of the elder girls gradually slipped away from the merry throng, one by one, mysteriously, and with signs to each other, and little pluckings of frocks and touchings of elbows. Something was to be done in the house which was to overcome all the rest of the children with wonder and ecstatic delight.

Now, we have forgotten to mention, and we hasten to repair the omission, that among this merry group of the juvenile members of the Shillingkrite families and their small friends of various sizes, there were also several little rustics, children of peasants who lived on the outskirts of Cologne. These peasants were the tenantry of the Doctor, and sent him large quantities of grapes every year from their vineyards to make his physic with. Every year their children were invited in this way to join the party on Christmas Eve, and a most wonderful pleasure and honour it was felt to be. Among these latter on the present occasion we must mention two in especial—Zachary and Jane, the boy being nearly eight years old, and the girl just seven. The little rustics were brother and sister, both dressed alike in new Prussian peasant blouses of light blue, except that Zachary wore a very small leather cap with a peak, and Jane had the attempt of a hair-plait behind, not unlike the curl of a little pig's tail, and wore a pretty wreath of small ivy-leaves besides.

And Zachary and Jane were now about to behold a CHRISTMAS TREE for the first time in their lives! We shall, therefore, describe everything from this moment, not exactly as it was, but as it appeared to their all-wondering and enraptured eyes.

Lights flashed from the sides of the closed window-curtains of the largest room in the house! All the children ceased their merriment, and cried, "Look!" They quite forgot the Man of Snow; but he, also, showed signs of excitement, for a smile of light gleamed across his pale countenance. The children clustered together in a group, looking at the lights that glanced from behind the curtains of three large windows on

the ground-floor, and then suddenly, by some secret, yet unanimous impulse, they all began to leap up and down, as though this would enable them to see what was behind the mysterious curtains.

A bell now rang loudly in the house. Away flew all the children, pell-mell; and Zachary and Jane, being the smallest of those who made this delighted rush to the door, were both overturned, and rolled in the snow. Several young Shillingkrites, however, instantly turned back, and helping them up, hurried them along, and into the passage after the rest.

"We are not hurt, and we don't mind," cried Zachary.

"And I don't care for a mouthful of snow; do I, Zachary?" said little Jane.

The passage which they entered, and where all were now huddling and laughing, and groping about, was quite dark.

"Where are we?—which is the way?—where are we going?" cried many voices at the same time.

Again the bell rang in the house, while a voice cried "*Auf's schnellste!*" (quick! quick!) from a room not far distant, to judge by the sound. Meanwhile the throng continued to press onward somehow or other, led by several children of the family, who of course knew the way very well, but pretended to be in as much doubt and confusion as the rest. Suddenly a side door opened, and displayed another dusky passage with a green star at the further end. Thitherward moved all the little feet in a tramping crowd, though getting slower and slower as they approached the green star, which turned out, on a closer inspection by two of the oldest and most courageous of the children, to be a hole in a dark curtain, with a beautiful piece of coloured glass fastened over it. The curtain was now drawn aside by an invisible hand, and a great light burst through, as the children found themselves urged onward by a strong pressure from the crowd behind into the very room where a blaze of illumination told them that the Christmas Tree was placed. Dr. Shillingkrite himself, attired in a long white robe bordered with ivy-leaves, a black cord round his waist, a bear-skin cap on his head, and wearing a huge pair of spectacles with red glasses, received them at the entrance, waving one hand in a most polite yet important manner.

Dazzled and intoxicated with the light and splendour around them, the children all remained in one close group, little Zachary and Jane being placed in front, and standing hand-in-hand, gazing with bright round eyes at the astonishing Christmas spectacle that rose up before them at the opposite end of the room.

In a vase of enormous size, which seemed to be made all of ivory, with bands of gold (though, in truth, it was an old wine barrel covered with glazed paper and gold leaf), stood the stem of a dark fir-tree which rose up into a succession of expansive branches, putting out their arms in varied lengths, so as to form the outline of a fine pyramid. But the outline was scarcely visible, owing to the glancing rays of light that shot from every part. On every branch stood up a number of bright flames, sometimes like the flame of a candle, sometimes like the sparkling of steel or glass, sometimes like lamps of scarlet and violet and green light, sometimes like little brilliant peeping stars. The number of the lights was only equalled by the number of minute fairies dressed in white, who floated about in the air all round the Tree, so as almost to touch it, and of little elves dressed in short jackets, made of the peel of russet apples, who popped in and out of the openings between the boughs, in all directions.

The children had remained motionless and breathless for some time; and then they all said "Oh!"—and began very slowly to approach a few steps nearer towards the wonderful Tree.

But the fairy-land inhabitants of the boughs and around them were only a part of their many charms and treasures. As to fruit of an edible kind, the abundance and the variety were alike unspeakable. Grapes, both white and red, hung in large bunches beside clusters of dried raisins; and now and then a wind seemed to shake the boughs, and down fell a shower of nuts and sugar-plums of all sizes, shapes, and colours, and rattled about over the floor, till Zachary and Jane, unable to contain themselves any longer, clapped their hands and laughed aloud, in which the whole company immediately joined.

But again the little rustics grew silent, and continued to gaze with rapture and a degree of awe at the beautiful Christmas Tree. New enchantments and fresh objects of curiosity were discovered every moment; so that they grew giddy with the vision of golden oranges and silver apples, rings and bracelets of all sorts of jewelled fashions, and sugar-work in all sorts of colours and devices, dangling by invisible threads from the same bough; while on the next bough, above, grew small picture-books and toys; and on the next bough, below, sat a row of canary-birds and bullfinches, who sang and piped every now and then, and danced up and down on their twigs.

"Suppose," said Dr. Shillingkrite, "we should venture to advance close to the Christmas Tree! Now the youngest go foremost. Who are the youngest? Several of those have hidden themselves. It must be Zachary and Jane, I think. Yes, my small friends, it is your privilege to advance before all the rest."

Zachary felt little Jane's hand tremble in his; indeed, it was evident that they both trembled.

"Don't be frightened, dear Jane," said Zachary, in a whisper. "The good Tree will not set us on fire."

"It is a great light to go near," answered Jane, drawing back; "I feel it."

"But if it does burn us," said Zachary, "it would be with beautiful fire, like the dear God's heaven, and not hurt, you know, Jane."

"No," said Jane, trembling, "not to hurt us."

"Now," exclaimed Dr. Shillingkrite, "approach! Enjoy, Baron Zachary, and you, Princess Jane Rosenkohl, enjoy to the utmost the *Weihnachts-spiele* (Yule games). Why do you stand still, Baron Zachary? Do you not know that this beautiful Tree, covered all over with brightness, and happiness, and the gifts of all the riches of the four quarters of the earth—a Tree whereon no living thing makes war upon another, and where fairies, and elves, and canary-birds, and bullfinches sing together in harmony—a Tree where Turks of baked dough and currants, and Jews who rejoice in preserved citron faces, and are dressed in light yellow robes of fresh lemon-peel, sit under the same tent with Christians, as you see there to the left, where they all sit round an egg, painted like the terrestrial globe—do you not know that the nearer you approach to the light and the warmth of this Tree, the more safe you are from all the scorplings of life which may happen in the house, and all the cold storms which may blow when you are unprotected in the fields; therefore, approach, Zachary and Jane, and fear not."

"And so we will," said the little fellow. "Come, dear Jane."

The two little rustics now advanced hand in hand. On coming closer to the Tree they descried between the lower and broader boughs small stages made of straw. On one of these was represented a field in harvest time, with all the peasants at work with their horses and carts, piling up and carrying away the corn. On another stage they saw four lions and four lambs in a green meadow, dancing a quadrille; their music being the singing of goldfinches and nightingales who were perched on the backs of slumbering hawks and purring cats. A wonderful manufactory, full of machines and wheels all at work, filled a third and very

large space. On another stage they saw a fine soldier in his helmet, but with a muzzle and chain, who was dancing round with a pole in his hands, while a handsome brown bear sat near him, holding the end of the chain with one hand and a Christmas pie in the other. On another stage they saw the waves of the sea, all moving and glittering; and presently a ship came bowing and swaying, and gliding on its way till it gracefully passed out among the dark green boughs, and a soft music was heard for a moment in the distance, as it disappeared.

"Oh, take me with you!" cried little Jane, enraptured at the fair vision of the ship, not knowing what she said, and holding very fast by Zachary's hand.

On another stage was represented a large infirmary or hospital; and an old green dragon, dressed in a nurse's gown and cap, was very busy in attending upon the sick; while a remarkably fine figure of St. George was seen in the dispensary, stirring up some medicinal ingredients in a mortar—his breast-plate and helmet being full of cordials, and his shield covered with pill-boxes.

The youngest but one of Dr. Shillingkrite's daughters called particular attention to this. "It is our dear father's favourite one," said she. "He furnished us with the figures himself, all made of corks out of his drawers, and the cordials and pill-boxes are all his own."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed all the children in a loud chorus.

"Do I stand here for this?" ejaculated the Doctor, in a great flutter of offended dignity. "Bring Lieschen before me, that I may give her something to do her good."

But Lieschen had vanished in the throng, and was nowhere to be found.

Again attention was called to the stages, and a new one, which had hitherto been unobserved, was discovered. It was a scene in a forest, where, at a rustic table in front of a pretty wooden hut, sat a Bengal tiger, playing chess with a young gentleman a student of natural history.

There is yet another stage. It is the highest of all, and not very distinctly seen; but there it is to a certainty. Upon it there rise the walls of a Temple which is being built. Artists and workmen are all labouring away, and there is a great crowd, also very busy, and doing its usual part of looking on, and doubting if the thing in hand can ever be accomplished.

One more stage—the last—has hitherto been quite overlooked. It is the lowest of all on the Tree, and lies in a direct line beneath the stage with the Temple. This stage, just discovered by the children, is a very dark one, nearly hidden by the fir-boughs. Two hostile armies are arrayed in the background, with needle spears and rout-cake shields, and cannons formed of broken sticks of peppermint painted black, while two Kings, all made of rich sugar-work, and with bright sceptres in their hands, are standing in front, ready to order the armies to fight for a particular sugar-plum.

This was in direct opposition to all the Doctor had said of the universal peace and harmony and love of which the Tree was the illustrious emblem. Several of the children remarked this to each other; but their attention was again called to the military stage, where a tiny trumpeter was almost blowing his eyes out in sounding a charge. The two Kings advanced towards each other, and raised their dainty sceptres to fight. The deadly swords and spears of the armies were advanced—the cannons pointed—when, at this moment, a large corner-stone fell from the hands of the workmen above, who were building the Temple, and down it went between the two warlike sugar-work Kings, knocking them both into red and grey powder.

A shout, partly of alarm and partly of merriment, burst from the children; but this was changed into a more real alarm, with no fun at all, when they saw that some of the burning stars of the Tree, and lights, and coloured lamps, had set fire to a part of the boughs below. The two hostile armies were burnt up to nothing in no time; and even the records of the particular sugar-plum for which they were about to fight were lost to the page of history in the general conflagration.

Noble music now sounded from behind the Tree. Dr. Shillingkrite and his two eldest sons, with Lieschen and another little girl, exerted themselves successfully in extinguishing the fire, so that it extended no farther among the boughs, with all the precious fruits and fancies. Again, the grand music sounded; and as it proceeded with its harmonies, the walls of the Temple were seen to rise in the light, higher and higher, till crowned with cupolas and screen-work, with statuary and spires.

"Want to go there!" ejaculated little Jane, with devout eyes.

"There won't be any more fire to climb up, to hurt the Temple, will there?" asked Zachary, in a most anxious tone.

"No," said the Doctor. "The fire of that Tree burns nothing that is good, or burns it only for its good; so that dust and ashes alone are destroyed, while the good life of things remains. As for all these wonders of the Tree—its toys, and elves, and ornaments, and fairies—these are the Gifts of Christmas Eve—the happy memorials of peace, abundance, and universal love. Share them among you, my children; and in the mode of sharing, remember that ye 'love one another.'"

THE NEW YEAR'S PROMISES.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

THE New Year came with a bounding step,
Jovial, lusty, full of glee;
While the brazen rhymes of the church-bell chimes,
Like an eager crowd exultingly,
Hurried along on the crisp cold air,
To herald his birth to thee and me.

He stood beside us fair and young,
He laid his warm hand upon mine;
Our hearth glowed bright with a cheerful light,
And our eyes lit up with a keener shine,
As we raised a goblet brimming o'er,
And pledged him in the ripe red wine.

I know not if the merry guests
Heard the words that I could hear;
If on that morn when he was born
They held communion with the year;
But this I know, he spoke to me
In low sweet accents, silver clear:—

"My sire," quoth he, "is dead and gone;
He served thee ill or served thee well,
But only did as he was bid;
Thou wert the master of his spell;
He took his character from thee—
Most willing and most tractable.

"Such is my promise, weigh its worth,
If thou'lt be sad, I'll help thee sigh;
If thou wilt play thy life away,
What friend shall aid thee more than I?"

Whate'er the colour of thy mind,
I'll wear it for my livery.

"If thou'lt be busy, I will toil,
And aid the work that thou hast planned;
If thou wilt quaff, or jest, or laugh,
Mine hours shall waste at thy command;
If thou'lt endeavour to be wise,
I'll aid thy soul to understand.

"Do with me as thou wilt, good friend;
I'll be thy slave in time to be,
But when I pass—whate'er I was—
I am the master over thee.
My father's ghost inspires my words;
Take heed!—make friends with Memory.

"To-morrow and to-day I'm thine,
But all my yesterdays mis-spent
Shall live as foes to thy repose,
And clog thy spirit's free ascent;
Pursue thee when thou know'st it not,
And haunt thee to thy detriment."

The New Year's face was calm and sad;
His words still floated through my brain;
When the guests around with a joyous sound
Gave him a welcome once again:
"May he be better than the last!"
Was aye the burden of their strain,

And the New Year's face grew bright as ours;
Friends, kinsmen, lovers, true and tried,
We formed the prayer that Heaven might spare
Our hearts to bless him when he died;
And thus we ushered the New Year in,—
And welcomed him to our fire-side.

CHRISTMAS EVE, AND WELCOME TO OLD FRIENDS.

BY JOHN A. HERAUD.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARSHALL.

CHRISTMAS EVE! The Eve before the great Festival of Birth. On the sandals of the Morn the motto written was "*Esperance!*" and the day has not yet worn out the pleasing epigraph. Few have learned, with the Hebrew preacher and our own Twickenham poet, to regard the mysterious fact of Birth with other than joyous anticipations. To almost all, the Day of Birth is the best of days. We are born—to live; and reason—to become wise. What! though Death close a certain series: Birth, in order of time, has precedence. What! though Death crown the human with immortality: he may not crown what never has been born. The stern Angel's highest honour is still to be "gently considered" as a new or second birth. By such soft epithets we would bribe the universal despot to smile upon us. But Birth is, from the first, known as a cherub visitant, and causes us at once to recognise the Divine in the human. Contemplate the new-born child!

Heaven lies about us in our Infancy!

Christmas Eve! Those now assembled in its celebration even await such an Advent, such "a good time coming," as the birth of a man-child—such as ensures the completest joy, the fullest gratification to the maternal longing. They await it, mystically—representing thus an imagined waiting, on such an eve, nearly two thousand years ago. They are, in fact, engaged in a kind of drama—and that drama a truly domestic one. In Italy, on the contrary, they make of such representations a public affair. They are enacted in churches, under cathedral roofs, before gorgeous altars, with set rituals, by priestly performers, accompanied by sublime harmonies, and set-off with new dresses, scenery, and decorations. And so, likewise, it was in England, in the days of "the Coventry Mysteries." But in these we are less vicariously inclined. We now take our piety home with us, and seat it by the family hearth, and expect it to become identified with the household moralities, and realised in the practical charities of daily life—not reserved as a thing exclusively for state occasions and public ceremonies—a show, and nothing but a show. These are not the days of sham, but of realities. Whatsoever is good must now be made common; must be numbered among the private amenities; found involved in the world's actual business, as its ever-guiding soul, its ever-inseparable spirit. English piety is less ostentatious, but it has more of the heart. Its influences are vital, and its fruits looked for in the personal conduct and character—not elsewhere.

The domestic drama here enacting is, in its nature, *impromptu*. Each individual does in it what is pleasing to him or her. Nevertheless, there is a certain tradition observed—that of Kissing under the Mistletoe, for example. Such a part, surely, might be soon learned—yet are some youths so bashful as to make it not seldom of difficult performance. But then this same delicacy of sentiment is an incident proper to the rôle; a situation is got out of it, an effect. The bashful must of course be encouraged—nay, knowing what is expected from the time, will probably himself seek to rid him of his now inconvenient reserve. "Him," we say—for it is the masculine biped that is most easily beset with this strange infirmity. But here your true lady will be adroit enough to help the gentleman out of his amiable difficulty; and, by making his part easier for the evening, may make her own the happier for life. Nor let her fear subsequent admonition—for still of every parental *Brabantio*, however harsh, this will be the creed—

If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head if my bad blame
Light on the man.

At such a season, too, the heart may be allowed to speak—for it is at such that conventional restraints are accustomed to be thrown off. It is then that the better feelings have license of utterance. See that young man and maiden; in their sequestered nook, how, like stockdoves, they murmur their passion, by other ear than their own unheard. He is evidently putting the most important question of his life to her whom it most imports. "To be, or not to be." Look, what a happy thing is marriage, observe its blessed results; remark here a holy family—father and mother, and son and daughter. Let us, too, multiply felicity fourfold; and, *maugre* the political economists, do justice to human nature. Time was, when the numbers of the people were esteemed the riches of the nation—time must be, when this truth shall again rise into the ascendant, or the world dreams idly of a paradise restored.

The scene is altogether a gay, a joyous one. It is not only a festival but a festivity. Here are music, song, dance, sport, good cheer, "cakes and ale;" all things that make glad the heart of man, woman, and child. And "ginger," too, is "hot in the mouth." For there is the merry jest, the good-natured gibe, the riddle, and the roundelay.

If I give thee honour due,
Mirth! admit me of thy crew.

And let no cynical *Malcolio* censure our cheerfulness for profanity. "To the pure all things are pure;" the loudest laughter may be as sacred as the most silent of tears, let the motive to it be no less kind and generous. It comes not of scorn, contempt, or malignity; but of "full-throated" happiness—a fountain of sparkling waters, gushing over or jetting upward, from mere excess of abundance. Happiness!—yet not complete; for the time's felicity is proper to expectation, not fulfilment. It is arrayed in the robes of hope, not of possession. It is Christmas Eve—not yet Christmas Day.

But now the Eve has passed, and the night has also passed; the morning has arisen, "with healing on his wings." Again, in this nineteenth century, the world's Saviour is mystically born, and his birth dramatically celebrated, both in the Baron's Hall and in the Peasant's Cottage. What yestere'en was merely indicated, shall to-day be bountifully expressed. Our forefathers made of this a jovial time—worshipping Bacchus under a holier name. *Sir Toby Belch* and *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* were good fellows and honourable, in the days of Elizabeth—ay, and since. In those of Queen Anne, drunkenness was as much the vice of the well-born as of the ill-bred. Thanks to the educators of modern times, we have at length been taught the gain of temperance, if not the virtue. Having made the acquaintance of the Muses, we now emulate more refined and elegant pleasures. By cultivating our tastes, we have mended our manners. The child of the nineteenth century is born to better inducements than was the heir of the seventeenth—the dullest of modern infants, invested thus with a better fortune than welcomed the boy-Shakespeare, enjoys advantages unparalleled in history. Every year, too, adds to the general experience. Not a Christmas can pass without some new Truth having been born into the world. This year, especially, has had its own truth—this year of revolutions, republicanism, and reaction—which truth let us cherish, and hail with angel-hymns; for in its evolution the Destiny of Europe is included.

Let the master of the Baronial Hall welcome both the New Era and the New Truth. Neither will do him any harm—the purpose of both is simply to make him a better and an abler man. Power and wealth can no longer safely enrobe them in "the comfortable fur" of dullness. They must be bright and cheerful as a Christmas fire; their garments should be gay as the season, and their hearts and their countenances as full of benevolence and of sympathy. Knowledge must make their brows to shine with that smooth and polished surface which distinguished the forehead of Canning. Not in bulk or might of limb; not in their large possessions; but in wisdom they must look to be strong; seek their safety in their wits, not in their thaws or their coins, their sinews or their acres. If they desire dominion, thus only shall they secure it; if they long for treasure, thus only shall they find it. For the study of the horse and the dog—noble animals—now let them study a nobler, Man! For the stable and the kennel, let them enter the library and the lecture-room. And when thus they have qualified themselves for the exercise of authority, then will the people's obedience be readily conceded; and when thus they shall have learned how wealth may be impartially distributed, and find their true interest in the equitable application of the science, then may they safely be entrusted with the stewardship of riches. No man will envy his neighbour the enjoyment of what he holds for the benefit of all.

Our forefathers in their rude fashion doubtless aimed at this; and the Hospitality of the Hall at this festive season is not only a romantic fiction, but an historical fact. All were welcome—all, from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night, were welcome—to good cheer, to right good substantial carnal comforts. Heart and hand went together, and Bounty had more than a mere name to live. She had a real existence, and nature and art were made tributary to her charitable behest. Let us, however, reflect. More is required now from every man than was then expected from any. The bountiful motive is indeed the same; but the method of display is an improved one. The relations of society are changed. They are no longer of a merely material character; they now respect the mind as well as the body. Beef and beer are excellent; but education is more excellent. The soul demands instruction as her greatest good; she pants for it as the hart for the water-brooks, and will not be balked of her strong desire. Let her drink of it fully and freely, without money and without price; and, through the length and breadth of the land, let there be public channels dug for the unrestricted supply of the healing stream. A little knowledge may or may not be dangerous; but there is no peril in drinking deep of the spring.

Than our fathers there were no deeper drinkers—no deeper thinkers. But the better attribute was too exclusively confined to a class. Some of that class we would indeed welcome as Old Friends and true Aristocrats—Spenser, Sir Philip Sydney, Shakespeare, Bacon, Taylor. None better understood the significance of Friendship. That old Grecian and Roman virtue had not yet suffered the damage which, we fear, it has undergone during the subsequent commercial period. We have not lately heard of many Beaumonts and Fletchers. All the more hail we this Christmas time, since it brings back an old sentiment which cannot become obsolete without imperilling the dearest unions. Friends who see not—cannot see—one another at any other period of the year, meet uniformly at this. Regularly as Christmas comes round—true to the day—the same friends dine at the same board—the same in number, though not in age; unless, indeed, the over-moody Death, in certain of his sublime abstractions, may have withdrawn from the Christmas circle some whom Heaven had previously invited to its own "high banquet-table."

And what a blessing is this to the humbler classes—to the peasant and the mechanic—to those whose daily subsistence is dependant on their daily endeavour—who, according to Wordsworth, "understand the wisdom of the prayer that asks for daily bread." Necessity, that stern mother, had kept them apart so long, and would, but for this yearly custom, separate them for ever. But, now, "Welcome to Old friends!" O welcome! Thank God that again we thus meet, and can congratulate each other! Is there not happiness in the clasp of the hand—in the glance of the eye? See how parent and child—with that "pious brute," the household dog—all come forth to greet the acquaintance of "auld lang syne"—to assure them that they can never be forgot—that they never have been—that they have been eagerly expected—that they are as welcome as ever!

To those capable of this sublime sentiment, what good gift need be denied? And why should not they and their betters be again friends as of yore? Let the Worker recognise the Employer as his oldest and best friend; and let the latter give him good reason to do so. Let him not deny to any class that most precious of all gifts—the gift of Education. Let it not be withheld, in whole or in part, from any. Give to all the full opportunity of complete education, and the task of government would become so easy as almost to supersede its necessity. The wheels of society would move readily, as if instinct with life. The apparatus, kept in constant repair, would answer immediately to the directing hand. Already, this is so to a considerable extent in England. Men are now

more disposed to rely on moral than on physical forces; hail the demonstration of the former with peculiar rapture, and condemn the latter even though exhibited in support of a just cause. What an immeasurable benefit is here secured! a benefit calculated to make the present Christmas signally happy. Henceforth not only the end, but the means whereby it is attainable, must be equally recognised for good. Violence must be repudiated as an unmitigable evil—

Your gentleness shall force,
More than your force move us to gentleness.

Of old this quality of gentleness was supposed to be confined to the Family of the Hall. It is so no longer. If Christmas in the Hall is now marked by more elegance and refinement than were known in any previous century; you shall find, also, that in the Cottage modern Christmas has its amenities, and that the poor man's pleasures have become both intellectual and moral. Gentleness is no longer a distinguishing quality but accepted as a popular law. It belongs to every one; to the peasant and mechanic as well as to the peer and the squire. So much is it a mark of our recent progression, that the complaint of those who would have the world stand still now generally is, that "now-a-days every one would be a gentleman—thinks himself a gentleman—apes the manners of a gentleman." Is this such a dreadful evil, that it should excite special alarm? Or is it not alarm, but wonder that is excited? Not the evil but novelty that is apprehended? Untried things, of course, are of uncertain operation; but, from gentle aims and accomplishments, nothing peculiarly unpleasant, one might think, need be expected. Of the opposite quality, we have had enough experience; and might consent to try this, if only for the sake of the change.

The sake of Change! Are there some who deem the motive unworthy? Let such learn that it is not necessarily so. Vicissitude is grateful. Nature observes it—in morning, noon, and eve—in the weeks and months and seasons of the year. Change! Why, it is the sentiment of this time—of this tide of Christmas—of this transition period between the Old and the New. These are the Last Days of the Old Year; this day week will be the First Day of the New Year. The "Merry Christmas" it is, that inaugurates the "Happy New Year." If it be true, as the Royal Sage asserted, that the Day of Death is better than the Day of Birth, be it remembered that, at this season, we have both epochs, and the good of both urged on our peculiar consideration. Now, at this moment, while we are so merry, the Old Year is dying. We are like Hercules in the house of Admetus while Alceste was expiring. But, like him, we are not permitted to be disturbed with the knowledge of the melancholy circumstance, lest the laws of hospitality be violated. We have a right to be merry, notwithstanding. The Lord of the Year has so decreed it. Let the departed, therefore, be taken forth and buried in secret. Be assured that He looks forward to his advantage in it. To Him shall the New Year be brought as a New Bride. The veil, that so classically shadows her face, only for awhile conceals her identity from her Beloved. Withdraw that, he shall perceive that the Old and the New are one, except that (O startling paradox!) the New is a day older. In this respect only "another"—in all regards else "the same." Yes! Time is always old and always young. Though flowing from the most ancient of days, still (to borrow a figure from Charles Lamb), like the river which supplies our native Babylon with its richest boon, 'tis rejoices in his eternal novelty.

THE WAITS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ORION."

'Tis heavy mist—'tis golden gloom;
Strange shapes emerge in grey and white!
Am I in bed, or in my tomb?
Dreaming, or waking?—Day, or night?
There comes a stir of wings around—
A restless darkness and a sound.

I hear soft music in the air;
It breathes a sweet unearthly strain,
Floating about like angels' hair!
It ceases—pleasure melts to pain.
Yet rapture wakes and thrills afar,
And lives in silence, like a star.

How thoughts fly back to childhood's hours,
When, full of bliss, thus half-awake,
We roved enchanted halls and towers,
While fairies sang upon the lake;
Or distant angels quired a hymn,
Of Jesus born in Bethlehem.

Again the music—moving near!
Thus did it swell in my young heart,
And made each loving hope more dear—
For Beauty is of life a part;
Once seen, she never leaves your side,
Though all the world reject, deride.

Beneath my window!—'Tis the Waits!
Fine strings, and deep melodious horn.
The vocal clarionet relates
Some tale of true-love left forlorn.
And now it changes to a dance,
Merry, yet touch'd with old romance.

The darkness of our curtain'd rest
Is chased and cheer'd at Christmas time:
How cold the air beyond the nest!
The snow-flakes fall, and creep, and climb!
Icicles shine—the flagstones freeze—
I feel it; and I hear—a sneeze!

Reality! before thy face
Flies Poetry—but yet returns,
Unwilling thus to win the race,
And from thine earth-book largely learns.
Let us look out into the night,
And see "the music" in its plight.

This "music" goes not to the wars,
Yet must with care its life defend;
Therefore it muffles head and jaws,
And often qualifies a treacherous friend.
Cold night, my lads! or, rather, morning;
Though darkness quells all signs of dawning.

Beneath the faint lamp's frosty rays
There leans a figure, hard and spare;
A gentleman of "better days,"
Who lived too fast, and wore life bare.
He dress'd well—kept his horses, hounds—
A flower-pot now holds all his grounds!



THE CHRISTMAS WELCOME.—DRAWN BY MARSHALL.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)

Forth from his garret to the street
He wanders with a restless heart,

And thinks of youthful moments sweet,
While hopes, once strong, like ghosts depart.

Perhaps, remorse with sorrow takes
Some share in thoughts that music wakes.



THE CHRISTMAS EVE.—DRAWN BY MARSHALL.—(SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)



THE CHRISTMAS WAITS.—DRAWN BY KENNY MEADOWS.—(SEE PAGE 411.)

Let boyhood dances in the cold,
As poets sing. I, too, would dance;

But, from my nest so long unroll'd,
I now am spoilt for that blithe prance.

Leap back! and draw the curtains round—
Dream-music brings the sweetest sound!



CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS.—DRAWN BY HARVEY.—(SEE PAGE 407.)

The Comical Christmas Chronicle,

HOLIDAY HERALD, AND JOCULAR JOURNAL FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ALBERT SMITH, EDITOR.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1848.

Advertisements.



FOR CHINA DIRECT.—The fine New Aerial Ship "THE HEAD OVER HEELS," Z. 99; RODERICK DOO, Commander; touching at the top of Mont Blanc and the summit of the Pyramids. For freight and passage apply to the Castle Tavern, Air-street.



FOR ANY PART OF THE WORLD.—The fine New Balloon, "THE GULL," wicker-bottomed; CAPTAIN LARK, Commander. Carries an experienced parachute. Destination unknown, depending upon the wind; affording a fine scope for speculation. Freight according to weight.



RAPID COMMUNICATION WITH CALAIS, by the Queen Ann's Pocket-pistol, of Dover. By a shot connected with a line, in the manner of Captain Manby's apparatus, passengers are now whisked across the Channel in half a second; no trouble at the Custom-House. Nervous old ladies not treated with.



FOR BOTANY BAY, the fine old convict ship, "CRASHER," 350 tons; CAPTAIN BULGE, Commander; will sail after the next Sessions. For passage apply to any of the justices at the Old Bailey. Work will be found for all the passengers immediately on their arrival.



RAILWAY SPECULATION.—NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.—Application will be made, early in the Session, for leave to bring in bills for the following Railways:—Liverpool and New York, Folkestone and Boulogne (Submarine), Herne Bay and the Moon, Leicester-square and Michaelmas-day, and the New Line from the late Quadrant to the Middle of Next Week.—DOO and CHEATEM, Agents.



GOOD FUN FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES.—Just imported from Funland, per Snapdragon, a CARGO of JOKES, some second-hand, some new, and others quite as good. Several fine old Joe Millers will be found among the stock, which will be sold great bargains to comic writers and burlesque authors, requiring but little alteration. Also, Potted Puns, particularly recommended as agreeable additions to slow parties. A few Squibs upon last year's topics will be sold at a merely nominal price.



SAMPLE PACKETS, for Dull Family Dinners, at this Festive Season, will be forwarded to all parts of England, post free, for Sixpence, containing:—
One joke on the viands, such as "tongue," "rum," &c.
One ditto on passing events, such as Louis Napoleon, &c.
One Conundrum, such as "When is beer not beer?"
One Smart Reply, such as "You're another."
One Comic Parody, such as "Come it genteel."
Give your orders early.



CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.—THE FESTIVE SEASON.—Dr. MORTAR begs to call particular attention to his choice selection of MEDICINES for the present Season of Gormandising. A BOX of CHRISTMAS PRESENTS will contain—
2 Bottles fine Black Draught.
1 do Liqueur Tincture of Jalap.
1 do Best Decoction of Aloes.
1 Box Old Family Antibilious Pills.
1 Dozen Ounces Purified Epsom Salts.
The above will be sent, on receipt of a Post-Office Order for Half-a-Guinea, to any part of the kingdom, addressed
Dr. MORTAR, Croton-crescent.



RIME CHRISTMAS-BOX.—A large SAMPLE HAMPER of really useful PRESENTS will be sent by Mr. GOODHEART, upon receipt of an Order accompanied by a Remittance, containing—
1 Fine Turkey.
1 Pound of Best Norfolk Sausages.
1 Large Plum Pudding.
1 Peck of Potatoes.
1 Home-made Quartern Loaf.
Mr. GOODHEART ventures to suggest this as an improvement upon the wine and spirit presents, supposed to be all that is essential for Christmas benevolence and festivity.



THE SEA-SERPENT.—This hitherto-supposed-to-be-fabulous monster having been at last caught off Norway, will be exhibited, during the holidays, on the Eastern Counties Railway, which has been rented for that purpose. The head will be at Shore-ditch; the mane, at Saffron Walden; its fore paddles, now for the first time discovered à fleur d'eau, at Cambridge; its hinder ones, at Norwich; and its fish-like tail will be expanded over the triangular land between Yarmouth and Lowestoff. Please to refer to Bradshaw's Map, for localities. A variety of objects found in the stomach, such as men-of-war, small islands, volcanoes, whales, and icebergs, for sale.



GALLERY OF PRACTICAL SCIENCE.—NEW ADDITIONS.—Open every day for the holidays.—Among the latest novelties are:—
A. The machine by which historical novelists produce their books. It is something between a coffee-mill and a chaff-cutter. A number of works are put into the hopper, such as books on costume, and old chronicles, and on turning the handle, these are cut to pieces, and reproduced as three-volume works. The heroes and heroines are then put in by hand, and the novel is complete.
B. A CASE OF AMERICAN CURIOSITIES: the chief being some rare Coins, such as dollars, &c., preserved in a block of Pennsylvania ice. A variety of Clocks are truly national, being much given to "tick," and frequently "wound up." Some cheap Wooden Combs show the facility with which the Yankees can cut any teeth but their wisdom ones. Together with some cases of preserved Repudiation, recommended by the faculty to gentlemen in embarrassed circumstances.
C. A RINGLET OF MADAME THILLON, the celebrated singer. Although of a delicate texture, it is said to have been powerful enough to have drawn a theatre full of people after it.
D. QUENCHER'S NEW FIRE ANNIHILATOR, warranted to put out any fire ever lighted, from the kitchen to the attic. It consists of a pail, filled with cold water; and the way to use it, is gradually to pour its contents into the grate, when the fire will be immediately extinguished.
E. THE NEW MOTIVE POWER—an application of Clarke's Patent Blower, applicable to vessels of all sorts, when becalmed. The Blower is worked by a small engine of three or four horse power, placed in the stern of the vessel; and the blast being directed against the sails, will impel the ship forward at any desired rate.
With many other curiosities.

JOHN SMITH.—If the person of this name, who lived in London during the winter of 1846, will apply to Mr. Brown, of Liverpool, he will hear of something he don't like.

JOE.—You are implored to return to your home. You shall have a latch-key, no cold meat, smoke in your bedroom, visit the Flocks, get up when you like, keep your boots inside the parlour fender, and quarrel with your uncle. Everything will be done to make you comfortable.—Upper Clapton.



MATRIMONY.—A YOUNG GENTLEMAN, aged 25, of excellent connexions, but no prospects, and first-rate family, but limited income, is desirous of forming an alliance with a Young Lady about five years his junior. It is essential that she be possessed of ten thousand pounds, which the refined taste of the Advertiser will enable her to lay out to the best advantage. She must also possess considerable personal attractions, be an accomplished musician, a first-rate singer, an elegant dancer, understand French, German, Italian, and drawing, and be gifted with a perfect temper; in fact, be a Model Governess with an independent fortune. In return for this, the Advertiser can offer a happy home and an agreeable partner. The highest references given. Address, by letter only, COLEBS, Post-Office, St. James's-square.

New Books.

DRIOPIDES the DREARY; a Tragedy, in Fifteen Acts: and other Pieces. By WIREDRAWN HIGHTART, Esq., Author of "Mathematical Metaphysics," "Pimpilio the Fleabite," a drama; "Phrenology," a poem; and other works.
London: SLOW and SELDOM; and few booksellers.

NEW HISTORY OF ENGLAND.
On February 29th, 1850, will be published Part I., price One Shilling, of **THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,** from the Creation to the Invasion of the Romans; and also, a Continuation of Hume, Smollett, and Maundrell, from William the Fourth to Edward the Seventy-third. To be completed in One Hundred yearly Volumes, illustrated by the most available living Artists.—An early application for copies is requested.

JOURNAL of a TOUR made to GLOSTER by Dr. FOSTER in the Middle Ages; with a notice of the catastrophe that befel him during a storm on his way, and his determination not to undertake the journey again. With a Portrait and Notes.

MEMOIRS of EMINENT ENGLISHWOMEN: including those of Dame Trot—the Mother of Jack and Jill—the kindhearted Mrs. Hubbard—Miss Muffett, who sat on a tuffett—Mrs. John Sprat—the aged Female Equestrian of Banbury Cross—Margery Daw—the celebrated Female Aéronaut who went up in a basket ninety-nine times as high as the moon—and the Victim of Poor-Laws, who was driven, with a large family, to live in a shoe.

NARRATIVE of a RESIDENCE at the COURT of KING PIPPEN, with an account of the remarkable Black-bird-pie prepared for him; Memoranda of the Sums of Money kept in the Counting-house; the Queen's love for Bread and Honey; and the accident which befel the Maid, through the attack of a Savage Bird, whilst she was superintending the out-of-door Laundry Department. Now first collected from original documents.

"HOW MUCH LONGER ARE WE TO WAIT?"
Being an enquiry put by the "Boys," as regards the promise made to them, that "There's a Good Time Coming." In pamphlet form. Price 6d.

IN the PRESS, ELEMENTS of AUSTRIAN POLITICS; to be completed in Fifty Annual Shilling parts. Also, SPHTSPGHZUGELS PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY of central European names. Revised by KRTZ and PFLWENZER.

New Music.

NEW SONG.—"WILL YOU LOVE ME NOW AND THEN?" With its answer: "DEAREST, YES, IF I HAVE TIME." These two songs have been pronounced by the author, composer, and publisher, to be the most exquisite ever written. It is impossible for any young lady to sing them, without having an offer made to her within ten minutes of their performance, even when all ordinary modes of angling have failed.
London: TOOTLE and COMPANY, West-end.



NEW PET POLKAS.—Dedicated to the Dancing Darlings of England.
I. The Tootsy-pootsy Polka, composed by Tiny.
II. The Ittle Tidlums Polka, and Hey Catchey Catchey Waltz.
III. The Nursery Quadrilles, containing the following popular juvenile airs:—1. "Bye Baby Bunting." 2. "Baa! Baa! Black Sheep." 3. "Little Tom Tucker." 4. "Sing a Song of Sixpence." 5. "Boys and Girls come out to play."



NEW CHRISTMAS GROUP.—Madame Tussaud and Sons have just added to their collection likenesses of the following celebrated individuals, whom we have all heard of, but so few have seen:—"Lloyd," of the Exchange; "Mr. Gray," of the Inn near Holborn; the "Tavern Group," consisting of Tom, Dick, Charlotte, Dolly, Will, and other renowned restaurateurs, who have given their names to their houses; "the youthful son of Mr. Miles;" "Junius;" "Mr. Pickford;" "Mr. Bradshaw;" "Mr. Peter Parley;" together with the American Room (sixpence extra); containing a posthumous cast of the late venerable "Daniel Tucker;" "Uncle Jonathan," from a sketch by his nephew; "Mr. Knickerbocker;" "Miss L. Neal;" and a group of Buffalo men and girls, in their night dances.
Open from ten till dusk.

MR. LONGCHALK'S moving PANORAMA of the GREAT WALL OF CHINA, ten miles long. Equal to six-and-eight-pence-worth of cab-hire; and all for a Shilling. Begins at 10 A.M., and finishes at 11 P.M. Refreshments provided. Luncheons, dinners, &c.



ROYAL POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION.—Christmas Holidays.—Fun for the Boys!—Dr. Ryan's Lectures on Combustion and Caloric, illustrated by experiments with soapdragons and fireworks, chair and candle crackers, detonating balls, and fire-balloons. Professor Bachhoffer's Lectures on Social Derangement, as applied to apple-pie beds, cold pig, magic-lanterns in the drawingroom, wet shoes, snowballs, and chilblains. Dissolving Views (new series), of the Quadrant changing into nothing, an Illustrious Politician into everything, the National Gallery into anything, and Leicester-square into something. Models of new machines for making themes and Latin verses, writing impositions, and doing hard sums, will be in working order during the holidays. Old and young alike taken into consideration. For the Vacation only.

PERSONS WITH A LITTLE SPARE TIME ON THEIR HANDS continue to amuse themselves, in provincial towns, by paying attention to everybody's business but their own. A small fortune, without risk, may be obtained by bestowing one quarter of the care upon their own affairs that they bestow upon others. No Londoner need apply.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correspondents whose questions remain unanswered will be pleased to consider that we are either unable or decline to attend to their requests.

"J. L. B."—At Whist A plays a trump; B checks it; C throws away his King, and, making a losing hazard, goes in off the red ball, with two wickets down. What must D do, having fifteen in crib?—Back the field, except Khondooz is ridden by the Leander Club.

"Flokes."—It is stated that Chaucer is the father of English poetry. Can Chaucer's sister, therefore, be considered as poetry's aunt?—We must take time to answer this question: it never struck us before.

"Investigator."—Where can the Standard in Cornhill be seen?—The Standard can be seen in Cornhill, in any of the chop-houses, after half-past four.

"J. W. D."—You lose your bet. Billy Waters never played a violin solo at the Philharmonic. We certainly understand billiards better than music. Our notion of a canon is hitting both balls, and of a fugue, running away without paying for the tables.

"A Working-Man."—I have saved a small sum of money, which I want to turn to the best advantage. What gives most interest?—If you have saved sixpence, buy a number of the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. It gives more interest to everybody, than anything else.

"A Constant Reader."—Switzerland is in Tipperary. "Emma" should never refuse to bet gloves, even to the extent of a dozen pairs. If she wins, she is paid; and if she loses, she is paid just the same. It is always a safe game. Stipulate for Jowin or Houbigant.

"Polly" tells us that a young gentleman she knows has declared that if he gets her under the mistletoe at a house where they are going to pass the Christmas together he will kiss her. Is she to be angry at it?—Certainly not; but she must appear to be. And let her recollect, it is etiquette for young ladies to return all presents from young gentlemen.

"Viridis."—Dress will not get you a position in society, unless you have good manners. Thus, although you wear a white neckcloth and turn up your wristbands, yet, if you ask for the Schottisch, at an evening party, you will be put down for what you are.

"Burke."—There is no such title as Lord Upper Clapton.

"Sophy."—"Fandango" is the name of a lackadaisical Spanish dance, but is now applied as an adjective to wrong notions of what is proper. Thus, it is "fandango" for ladies to walk with a livery servant behind them; it implies "We would keep a carriage if we could; but as we can't, we'll show you that we have a footman." The following things also are "fandango":—Lace or embossed envelopes; dining in gloves, which suggests red hands; waltzing in the old trois temps style; always taking places, a long time before-hand, for the "Nozze di Figaro;" only believing in certain shops for different articles; getting engaged without prospects and believing in love under such circumstances.—(N.B. This usually occurs between 19 and 25 with young men); or supposing that, if you have a fixed professional or mercantile position, you can move in a really higher circle by living in Belgravia rather than Bloomsbury. In fact, "Fandangos" may be considered the "Gents" of general etiquette.

The Christmas Chronicle.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1848.

The publication of this ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS commenced a week ago, and will not finish for a fortnight.

THE charitable attempts made to ameliorate the social condition of the schoolboy by cakes rather large than rich, and other dainties, stowed in "the box," when the holidays conclude, have, it is true, an effect, to a certain extent, in making the separation from home less severe; but the stage of deglutition once passed, the sombre resumes its empire. The endeavours daily made to improve the general comfort of "the people," leads us to hope that the little people as well will be looked to. All the six points of our juvenile Chartists—and we call on the Westminsters, Merchant-Tailors, St. Pauls, Charter-Houses, and Mercers to aid us—are as follows:—

Firstly, The total abolition of the cane, block, and impositions; and substitution of unbonded fresh butter for the limited Dorset of the present system.

Secondly, The acknowledgment of the usher as a power only subject to the wishes of the scholars.

Thirdly, Allotments of garden land for sowing mustard and cress for supper, and furnishing pebbles to pelt the French master with as he leaves school.

Fourthly, Lawful resistance to all encroachments upon half-holidays and vacations generally; and also, on the part of the parents, to ten shillings in a quarterly bill for shoe-strings.

Fifthly, Rational and moral recreations; such as turning the little boys up in their bedsteads, or fagging them within an inch of their lives; putting thistles in the toes of the usher's boots before he gets up, or straws in the collar of his coat when out for a walk; and alluring the cocks and hens of the neighbours into the playground, for the purpose of instructing them in facitious performances.

Sixthly, A Red Republic in the School-room, with leave to erect barricades with forms, stools, desks, and the fender, whenever oppression may call for such demonstrations.

Let these principles pass into laws, and the happiness of the boys is ensured.

WE undertand that, in consequence of the great success of the Monster Serpent in the orchestra this year, M. Jullien has it in contemplation to engage the Great Sea Serpent for the next series of Promenade Concerts, and that M. Prospère will perform a solo on it in a new set of Quadrilles, to be composed expressly for the occasion, to be called the Dædalus Quadrilles.—Musical World.

AN INGENUOUS CHEMIST in AMERICA has invented a plan for compressing sunlight into an almost solid form by the hydraulic press. This is forced into cylinders fitted with the usual jet and stop-cock of a gas-burner; and, by the careful use of this, any degree of illumination may be obtained, from the gloom of twilight to the blaze of noonday. He has also formed an everlasting lamp, by hermetically sealing a globe of compressed light in a thick glass vessel. The idea is evidently taken from the Laputa cucumbers, but is carried out more simply.—Journal of Science.

DOUBTFUL POLICY.—Throwing thirty thousand pounds worth of manure into the Thames every year, and sending the same sum to wild African Islands to bring it all back again.—The Plough, the Sail, and the Fleece.

APHORISM.—The height of human wisdom is as the task of the eagle, which creates subterfuges the more that futurity recedes into petulance.—From the Chinese.

MONEY MARKET.]

FRIDAY, FIVE O'CLOCK.—The funds have improved to-day. We found a shilling in the pocket of an old resuscitated waistcoat; and a man came to pay us a half-crown that we never expected. Our Stock has been transferred well. This has been effected by reversing its front, and bringing the new part—the long ends usually buttoned under our waistcoat—up to the tie. The part worn under the chin, which was somewhat ravelled, has been clipped straight with a pair of scissors. We do not anticipate an alteration for some time.

We have not invested very profitably in railways, intending to go to Slough, and finding that the Great-Western had stopped their day tickets. Shares of all kinds have been buoyant, except ploughshares, which continue to sink when put in water.

LITERARY NOTICE.

THE NEW TENNYSON.—This is a new addition of the works of the above popular poet, in which many of his most famous pieces are adapted to the present time. We subjoin an extract:—

MARIANA AT RAMSGATE.

(AFTER SHE LEFT THE MOATED GRANGE.)

With penny chairs the level sands
Were thickly covered far and near;
And two distinct unearthly bands
Made dismal music 'neath the pier.
The people all looked slow and strange,
Mammas did wet-shoed children scold;
Unflinching were the bathers bold,
Within the telescopic range.
She only said, "I'm very weary,
Day after day the same;"
She said, "This Ramsgate is so dreary,
I'm sorry that I came."

Her yawns came with the waves at even,
Her yawns came e'er the rocks were dried;
She thought 'twas ten when only seven,
With nought to do but watch the tide.
After the ceasing of the bands,
When gas-lights flickered in the wind,
She drew aside the window-blind,
And gazed athwart the Goodwin Sands.
She only said, "I'm very weary,
Day after day the same;"
She said, "This Ramsgate is so dreary,
I'm sorry that I came."

And at the library at night
A man sang songs she knew of yore,
Or played old dances, polkas hight;
And from the room the wearing bore
Of "numbers one, too, three, and five!"
Came to her of all life bereft,
Till all the visitors had left,
Once more in lodgings small to stive.
She only said, "I'm very weary,
Day after day the same;"
She said, "This Ramsgate is so dreary,
I'm sorry that I came."

And ever when the waves were low,
And the hush'd winds were sure to fail,
She saw the yawning people go
For a delusive shilling sail.
But when the waves were quite at rest,
And all the wind had proved a sell,
The shadows of the party fell
Upon the still sea's glassy breast.
She only said, "I'm very weary,
Day after day the same;"
She said, "This Ramsgate is so dreary,
I'm sorry that I came."

All day within that seaside tomb
The people yawn'd, and star'd, and sigh'd;
At morning wished that noon was come,
And wished at noon for eventide.
Old novels cheer'd them when within,
Old worn-out tunes were played without,
Old newspapers were lent about,
Old square pianos made a din.
She only said, "I'm very weary,
Day after day the same;"
She said, "This Ramsgate is so dreary,
I'm sorry that I came."

The children digging on the shore,
Slow people boring, and the sound
Which to the donkeys, tired and sore,
The drivers made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she suffered pain
When the appointed time drew near
To dress and moon about the pier,
And stare, and gape, and yawn again.
Then said she, "I am very weary
Of Sackett's, shrimps, and sand;"
She said, "I'm off—this Ramsgate dreary
I cannot longer stand."

DE LUNATICO INQUIREND.—An interesting investigation took place at the Gray's Inn Coffee-house, on Tuesday, respecting the case of Mr. Hanwell Quirk, who was said to be incapable of managing his affairs. The poor gentleman's replies were most satisfactory; but the following facts were sustained by credible witnesses:—

He had once asked for beer at a *parvenu* dinner-party.
He had once followed a fire-engine to see where it was going to.
He had taken a ticket in a Derby Sweep and a Frankfort Lottery.
He had bought some wild ducks at the door.
He had been security for a friend, and had put his name to a bill.
He had taken the after-dinner assurance of a man, that he should be glad to see him whenever he called, at his word.
He had believed in a Republic.
Putting all these together, he was found mad.

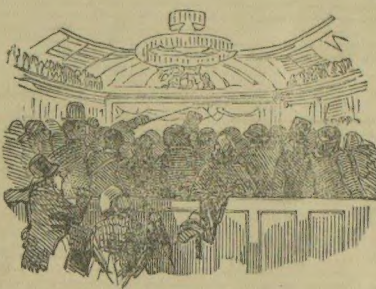
COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE was built in 1667, one year after the Fire of London, by Mr. William Shakespeare, assisted by Mr. Congreve, a great rocket-maker and dramatist, from the designs of Mr. Barry, a celebrated equestrian clown, and afterwards an eminent architect. Shakespeare lodged, during the building, at Old Hummum's, as it was called, and Mr. Hummum, senior, left many anecdotes of him. He was an extraordinary musician, and capital solo performer on the trombone. He produced several operas, which had great success; amongst which we may mention "Hamlet, the Moor of Athens," "Romeo and Cleopatra," "The Merry Wives of Venice," "Cymbelanus," "The Two Gentlemen of Windsor," and other well-known works. Dr. Ben Johnson, who wrote the "Dictionary," was a great friend of Shakespeare's, as also was Hamlet, the great jeweller. Covent-Garden Theatre is situated at the angle formed by the union of Regent-street and Mile-End road, in the parish of St. Mary's, Islington. In the adjoining Bow-street, country gentlemen are provided with beds, at the police quaters, gratuitously, and under the superintendence of the chief magistrate. The right to occupy these cheap lodgings is held by a regular tenure—that of breaking a lamp or striking a policeman. This is a curious instance of the quaintness of some of our early institutions, and the laws which regulated them.—From the "Stranger's Guide to London," a useful and interesting work.

ANTICIPATION OF NEXT YEAR'S EVENTS.



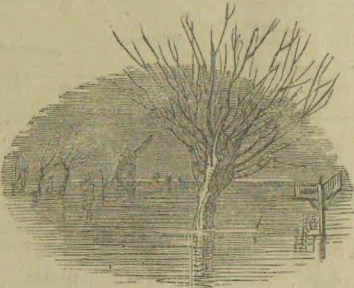
VER on the look out for novelty, we have been enabled, through an extended application of our celebrated telescope, by means of which we have long been enabled to see into the middle of the next week, to arrive at the following events of the ensuing year:—

JANUARY.



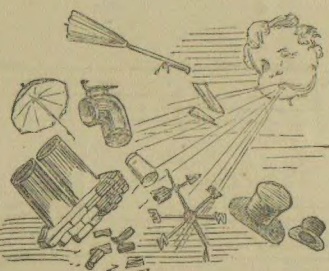
Unfortunately, he cannot find the receipts. Everybody determines to turn over a new leaf, and nobody carries out the determination. Revolution in Paris. France an absolute Monarchy.

FEBRUARY.



friends. Revolution in Paris. The Government of France changes to a Republic.

MARCH.



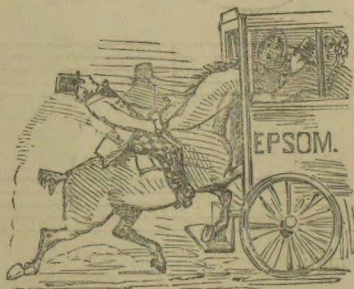
volution in Paris. The Government of France becomes a limited Monarchy.

APRIL.



tot, the old one being too far gone to return. Plenty of Bath buns appear, they having been told to go there because they were so cross on Good-Friday. Revolution in Paris. France an Empire, and Louis Philippe re-called to be at its head.

MAY.



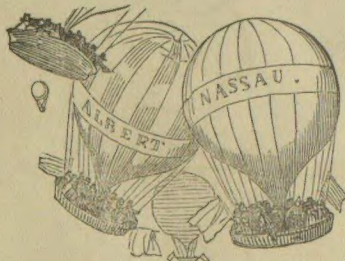
turn it. English theatres deserted, as no natives are good in months in which there is not an R. Revolution in Paris. Louis Philippe compelled to come back to us, and France becomes a Protectorate.

JUNE.



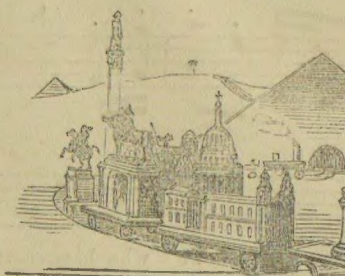
ution in Paris. The Government of France becomes despotic under Abdel-Kader.

JULY.



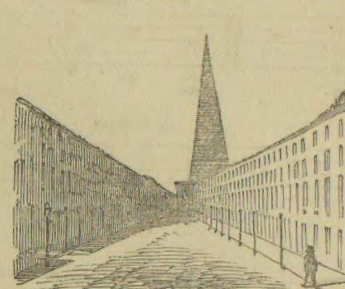
of American ice, during which it all melts. Revolution in Paris. France proclaims a Sultan, in whom the Monarchical power is vested.

AUGUST.



lodgings—then come down to Gravesend, whilst he has gone for four days to Boulogne—and are at last brought under the notice of the Sanitary Commission: carriage, sixteen shillings. Revolution in Paris France nothing.

SEPTEMBER.



laneous, under several heads.

OCTOBER.



Paris. France elects a Czar, and issues posting bills to the effect that, at last, tranquillity is established.

NOVEMBER.



for dinner, and the brass band in the gallery. Revolution in Paris. Barricades thrown up in ten minutes; and a Red Republic proclaimed in a quarter of an hour.

DECEMBER.



gin to save. Revolution in Paris. Other European powers, disgusted with the constant riots in France, settle the question by dividing that country amongst them. France extinct as a nation.

A NOVEL ENTERPRISE is about to be tried at the Strand Theatre, which, it is well known, is too small to support a company of more than one. On boxing-night the new lessee, who is a man of great energies, will open the gallery door at a quarter-past six, and having admitted the rush of three boys, and taken their money, will lock it, and proceed to the pit. Here he will remain ten minutes, and then remove to the box pay-place. When everybody has arrived, he will go round by the stage-door; and having played a solo on the drum, in the orchestra, by way of overture, he will draw up the curtain and appear in a monopolylogue, written expressly for him by a popular author; and between the parts he will go round with cakes and ginger-beer. As soon as this is over he will run round again to the front, and, having unlocked the doors, will call the carriages and let out the audience. When all have departed, he will throw the canvass over the fronts of the boxes, collect all the play-bills left behind (to get into practice for taking up bills), go round the house with a lantern to see that all is safe, and finally retire home much fatigued with his exertions.—From a Correspondent.

The aeronautic mania commences, and continues throughout the month. Frightful collision of balloons over London, on a general fête day. Mr. Poppins emigrates to Gravesend to economise, which consists in his paying two steam-boat fares a day, and racketting every night, because lodgings are so "slow." A lawsuit about a cargo

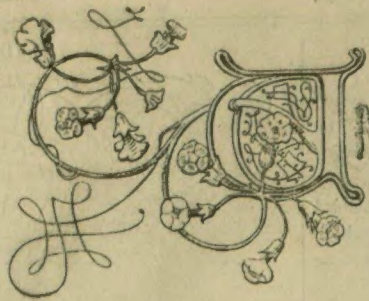
Opening of the new Cairo and Suez Railway, by which London goes out of town—the East being the only spot left tranquil for travellers. The French commence shooting on the Moors, on the 12th, in Algeria. Mr. Poppins has a brace of grouse sent him from Perth, which are five days coming—then stay a week at his London

The "last man" finds himself to be so one day, as he walks up Langham-place. Total desertion of London. Mr. Poppins indignantly disputes the fact that quarter-day has come on again—it cannot be three months since he paid his last; his landlady entertains a different opinion, on which he returns from Gravesend. Revolution in Paris. The Government of France becomes miscel-

A glorious harvest makes up for all past gloom. Penny-rolls a farthing a dozen; and every wheat-ear as large as Indian corn. Mr. Poppins looks out his win er things, and thinks that his old paletot, revived, will do for the dark evenings. Some Irish invited to a "Fête of Fraternity" at Boulogne, get up a fight, to show their notions of the thing. Revolution in

Grand Civic Banquet in Guildhall, attended by Gog, Magog, the Dragon on Bow Church, and the Grasshopper on the Exchange, in celebration of our old institutions still remaining firm and unchanged. Mr. Poppins, having an uncle a common-council-man, dines with the Lord Mayor, and has a headache all next day, which he says was the gas, the waiting

THE POETRY
BY
CHARLES MACKAY.



UNDER THE HOLLY BOUGH.

A CHRISTMAS LYRIC.

THE MUSIC
BY
G. W. GLOVER,
Author of "Jeannette and Jeannot."

In moderate time.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'In moderate time.' The score consists of several systems of music. The first system shows the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The second system includes the lyrics 'Ye who have scorn'd each o - ther, Or in - jur'd friend or bro - ther, In this fast fa - ding'. The third system continues the lyrics 'year; Ye who, by word or deed, Have made a kind heart bleed, Come, ga - ther'. The fourth system includes 'here. p Let sinn'd a - gainst, and sin - ning, For - get their strife's be - gin - ning, And join in friend - ship'. The fifth system includes 'now: Be links no lon - ger bro - ken, Be sweet for - give - ness spo - ken, Un - der the Hol - ly'. The sixth system includes 'un - der the Hol - ly, un - der the Hol - ly - bough.' The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f*, *p*, *dim.*, *lento*, *a tempo*, and *cres.*

I.
Ye who have scorn'd each other
Or injured friend or brother,
In this fast fading year;
Ye who, by word or deed,
Have made a kind heart bleed,
Come gather here.
Let sinn'd against, and sinning,
Forget their strife's beginning,
And join in friendship now;
Be links no longer broken,
Be sweet forgiveness spoken
Under the Holly-bough.

II.
Ye who have loved each other,
Sister and friend and brother,
In this fast fading year;
Mother and sire and child,
Young man and maiden mild,
Come gather here;
And let your hearts grow fonder,
As Memory shall ponder
Each past unbroken vow.
Old loves and younger wooing
Are sweet in the renewing
Under the Holly-bough.

III.
Ye who have nourish'd sadness,
Estranged from hope and gladness
In this fast fading year;
Ye with o'erburden'd mind,
Made aliens from your kind,
Come gather here.
Let not the useless sorrow
Pursue you night and morrow,
If e'er you hoped, hope now—
Take heart, uncloud your faces,
And join in our embraces
Under the Holly-bough.